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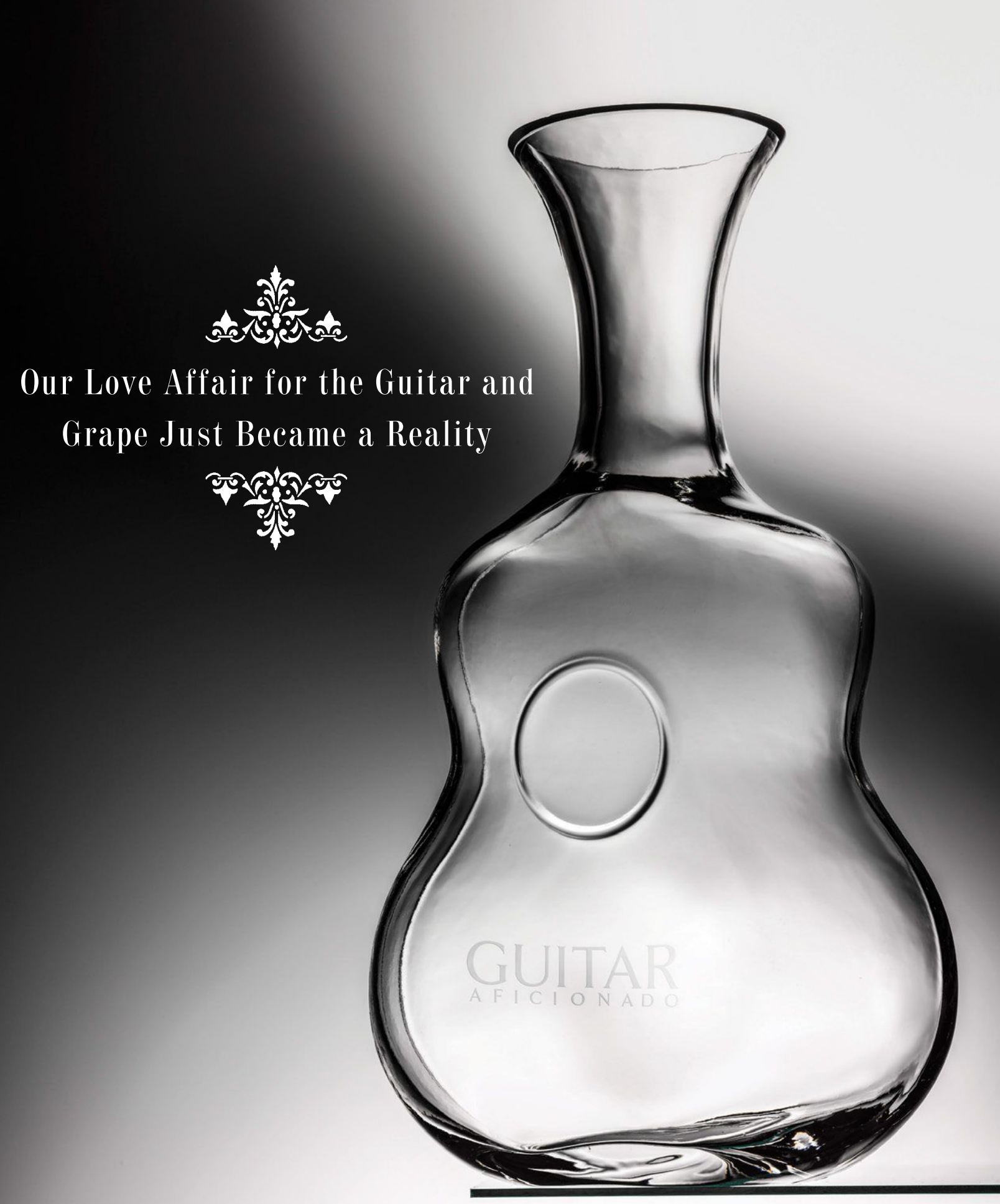

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BOSE

CONTENTS

VOL. 38 | NO. 9 | SEPTEMBER 2017

FEATURES

32 JOE PERRY

The Aerosmith guitarist announces the release of his signature Custom Monster Rocker Blaster boom box.

36 POLYPHIA

Their unique combination of shred, EDM, hip-hop and other genres makes them impossible to categorize and therefore worthy of attention. Introducing Polyphia, rising stars of the instrumental guitar scene.

44 GREGG ALLMAN 1947-2017

Guitar World bids farewell to a southern rock legend.

54 ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND: THEIR 25 GREATEST SONGS

Guitar World celebrates the timeles music of the Allman Brothers Band with this comprehensive overview of their 25 all-time greatest songs.

66 CARLOS SANTANA & THE ISLEY BROTHERS

Carlos Santana teams with the Isley Brothers to celebrate the *Power of Peace*.

Sheer Mag

20

TRANSCRIBED

"Yellow Ledbetter"
by Pearl Jam

PAGE 92

"Can't You See"
by the Marshall Tucker Band

PAGE 98

"Stranded"
by Gojira

PAGE 108

DEPARTMENTS

12 WOODSHED / MASTHEAD

14 SOUNDING BOARD

Letters, reader art and Defenders of the Faith

17 TUNE-UPS

Sleeping with Sirens, Adrenaline Mob, Sheer Mag, Kenny Wayne Shepherd, Nita Strauss, Laura Jane Grace and CHON

73 SOUNDCHECK

73. Mitchell MD400 and MS400 guitars
78. Ernie Ball Music Man Monarchy Series Majesty guitar
76. Michael Kelly Hybrid 55 guitar
79. Music Nomad Octopus Tech Tool
80. New EQ
82. Danelectro '59 Resonator

86 COLUMNS

84. String Theory
by Jimmy Brown
86. Acoustic Nation
by Dale Turner
88. In Deep
by Andy Aledort
90. All Or Nothing
by Oli Herbert

122 SHOP TALK

Thunder Road Guitars in Seattle, WA

MARIE LIN

COVER PHOTOGRAPH BY **LYNN GOLDSMITH**

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WOODSHED

VOL. 38 | NO. 9 | SEPTEMBER 2017

GOODNIGHT, SWEET PRINCE

2017 IS HALF over, and it hasn't exactly been a banner year so far in terms of rock music and guitar. In all honesty is seems as though we've had more to frown about than smile about this year—with the May 27 death of Gregg Allman being the latest reason for us to grieve rather than rejoice. Barely nine days after the death of Chris Cornell, too—talk about a depressing entry into summer.

Gregg Allman was a southern rock warrior, no question about it. Over the course of a career that spanned half a century, Allman kept right on truckin' no matter what he had to contend with: the tragic and untimely deaths of his brother Duane and other bandmates, bitter lawsuits, band breakups, financial issues, multiple marital splits, his own alcohol and heroin abuse, a hepatitis C diagnosis in 2007 and a liver transplant in 2010—just an endless list of hardships that might have crushed the spirit of a lesser individual. But not Gregg—no, he soldiered on until complications from liver cancer finally took him down just a few weeks ago. A sad occasion indeed, but it gives us an opportunity to celebrate his incredible career and the music of the Allman Brothers Band, which I have put into the very capable hands of three of our resident ABB experts: Andy Aledort, Alan Paul and Jimmy Brown. Read Alan's tribute to Gregg that begins on page 44, and enjoy the 25 Greatest Allman Brothers Band Songs feature on page 54.

Saying goodbye to our heroes is never fun, but in a way it gives us an opportunity to say hello to some new names and become acquainted with some fresh new talent. We have two examples of that in this issue: the piece on Polyphia that begins on page 36 and the interview with CHON on page 30. Both bands are key components in the burgeoning instrumental music scene here in America, and are wildly skillful when it comes to fusing elements of different genres and expanding the boundaries of rock guitar.

Finally, I'd like to take a moment to bid farewell to longtime *Guitar World* Executive Editor Brad Angle. For years, Brad served as an invaluable writer, editor and visionary when it came to this magazine and our presence in the digital realm. So much of what you see and read every day under the *Guitar World* umbrella—be it in the magazine, on our web site or social media outlets—was a direct result of Brad's expertise and forward-thinking ways, and he always did it for the betterment of the brand and for every one of you to make your time with us more enjoyable, never for his own ego. To say he will be missed would be an understatement.

—Jeff Kitts
Executive Content Director

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SOUNDING BOARD

Got something you want to say? **EMAIL US AT:** Soundingboard@GuitarWorld.com

Gov't Issue

Can't thank you enough for finally putting Gov't Mule on the cover of *Guitar World*! [*July 2017*]. Warren Haynes has been an inspiration of mine for a very long time, and it was nice to see he and bassist Jorgen Carlsson get the spotlight all to themselves in your magazine.

—Rick Moorehouse

Sound Advice

I was very glad to see the letter from Kevin Hamilton regarding the idea of inventorying your gear in the Sounding Board of the July 2017 issue. So many musicians ignore advice like this, but they shouldn't—and I'd like to take the subject one step further, because way too many musicians do not have their equipment properly insured either! The loss of equipment can be devastating. A lot of musicians think their gear is covered under their homeowners or renters insurance, but that's not necessarily the case. For example, my original homeowners policy only covered my guitars for hail and lightning damage! Whoever heard of a guitar meeting its demise from hail or lightning?! Further, most policies do not cover equipment when a loss occurs outside of the home. What musicians need to do is follow Kevin's advice and do a complete inventory of their gear, then contact their insurance agents to see what is covered and for how much money. Trust me, it's well worth the price if you ever need to file a claim.

—Rowen S. Poole

Shedding Light

I just got the July issue yesterday in the mail, and as always the first thing I read was the Woodshed; a habit that will never change. I want to thank you for the great reasons why we did not see Chuck Berry on the cover of the June issue, as I was one of the few who wrote in, in shock really not to see him there. I would have never thought of the things that Jeff Kitts wrote about in his Woodshed as I don't work in magazines. And I did thoroughly enjoy the tribute article to Chuck in that issue. I will still keep my loyalty to *Guitar World* as I have done since I picked up my first issue some 23 years ago.

—Joe DeBellis

Molto Bene!

I'm Lucio from Italy and I'd like to thank you for providing such tasty insights into all aspects of music (history, trends, anecdotes, valuable tips) and a sense of humor that makes your magazine really stand out, especially compared to the Italian ones. It's always a cheerful moment when I unpack the latest issue after it underwent such a long flight.

—Lucio Dalmonte

Sweet Dreams

I am 51 years old and, as a recent empty nester, decided to fulfill a lifelong dream: learn to play guitar. Other than the obvious fact that I needed to buy a guitar and amp, I figured that I should probably start learning about guitars, guitar lingo and all things guitar—so I subscribed to your magazine and another, hoping that reading guitar magazines would help me in my quest to become a real guitar player. But I must say, while I enjoy reading some of the articles, most of the educational content is way over my head. Can I suggest more content dedicated to the new/beginner guitar player? How to read tab, chord basics, how-to's on things like pedals, cables and amps—stuff like that would be so very valuable to the thousands of people who pick up a new guitar every month (with the hopes of learning how to play it).

—Randy A. Maynard

On Board

Thanks so much for the tab of Gary Clark Jr.'s "When My Train Comes In" in the July issue. Love it! Great issue; thanks guys.

—Steve Bruno

New Classics

Way too much Ozzy and Black Sabbath in the mag lately: what, are you getting kickbacks? If you are going to print classic rock tabs, how about doing some that you haven't already published numerous times, like David Bowie "Golden Years," Guess Who "Hand Me Down World," Starz "Cherry Baby," Clash "Train in Vain," Gordon Lightfoot "Old Dan's Records," Allman Brothers "Old Friend," Eurythmics "Would I Lie to You," Jethro Tull "Teacher" and anything by Harry Chapin would be great! There are plenty of good classic tunes out there that you have never transcribed and that most classic rockers would know. Now get to work!

—whip13

Ink Spot

I had this done as a tribute to the blues and to Robert Johnson—it's a combination of the two most well-known pictures of him. It reminds me of where this six-string thing started.

—Jay Thomason

GOT A TATTOO of your favorite band or guitarist you want to share with us? Send a photo of your ink to soundingboard@guitarworld.com and maybe we'll print it or post it on our Facebook page!

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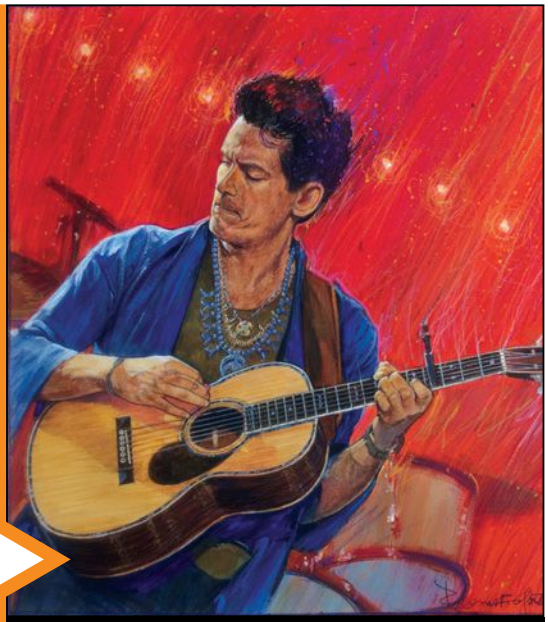
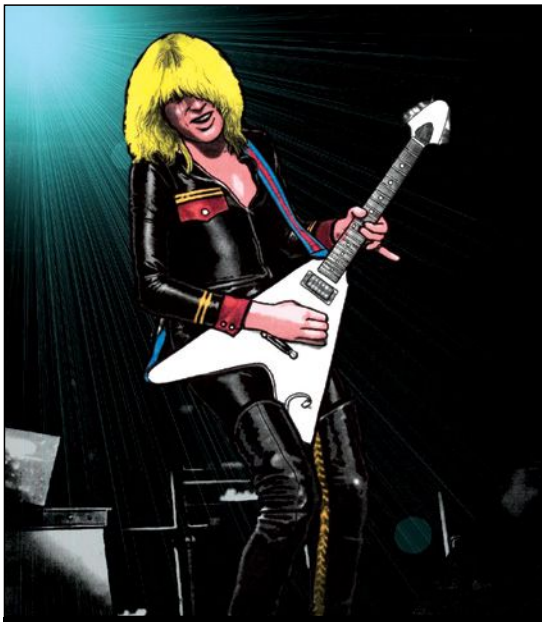
READER ART

OF THE MONTH

If you created a drawing, painting or sketch of your favorite guitarist and would like to see it in an upcoming issue of *Guitar World*, email **soundingboard@guitarworld.com** with a scan of the image!



JOHN MAYER BY ROBERT F GOETZL



MICHAEL SCHENKER BY DEVIN KING

DEFENDERS *of the Faith*

Erwin Gabitan

AGE 37
HOMETOWN American Canyon, CA
GUITAR Fender Custom Nocaster, Gibson Custom 1963 E-335, Gibson Custom '59 Les Paul Reissue, Gibson Custom '57 Black Beauty, Gibson Custom '54 Reissue, Gibson SG VOS, Martin Eric Clapton Signature
SONGS I HAVE BEEN PLAYING Junior Wells "Messin' with the Kid," the Sword "Arrows in the Dark" and originals from my band the Infidels
GEAR I MOST WANT Friedman Smallbox 50 head, original 1959 Les Paul

Rakiyah Roulette

AGE 22
HOMETOWN Charlotte, NC
GUITARS Gibson Les Paul, Fender Stratocaster
SONGS I HAVE BEEN PLAYING Girlschool "Hit and Run," Steel Panther "I Got What You Want," Avenged Sevenfold "Doing Time" and originals
GEAR I MOST WANT Goldtop or Trans Amber Les Paul

Spencer Lemire

AGE 21
HOMETOWN Waterford, Ontario, Canada
GUITARS Homemade Kurt Cobain Jaguar (pictured), 1993 Fender Duo Sonic, Yamaha RBX 350 bass, 1963 Eko Modello 200
SONGS I HAVE BEEN PLAYING Fugazi "Long Division" and "Blueprint," Shellac "Compliant" and my solo stuff under Davis Records Music
GEAR I MOST WANT Rickenbacker 4003 bass, Peavey '72 Super Festival F-800b, Hiwatt SE4123 4x12 bass cab

Are you a Defender of the Faith? Send a photo, along with your answers to the questions above, to **defendersofthefaith@guitarworld.com**. And pray!

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TUNE-UPS

ADRENALINE MOB 18
SHEER MAG 20
NITA STRAUSS 22
KENNY WAYNE SHEPHERD 24
LAURA JANE GRACE 26
CHON 30

JOSHUA HALLING

Hot Gossip

FLORIDA ROCKERS SLEEPING WITH SIRENS GEAR UP TO RELEASE *GOSSIP*, THEIR FIFTH FULL-LENGTH.

By Richard Bienstock

"I LITERALLY JUST got off stage in the middle of nowhere," says Sleeping with Sirens guitarist Jack Fowler, calling into *Guitar World* from a tour stop in Austria. "We were in some dirty, sweaty room with our buddies Pierce the Veil and Issues. It was nutty—the most punk rock show we've played in a long time."

Back when they released their 2010 debut, *With Ears to See and Eyes to Hear*, Sleeping with Sirens certainly had a lot of punk spirit running through their veins—and their music. Over the course of their next three full-lengths, however, the band—which also includes singer Kellin Quinn, co-guitarist Nick Martin, bassist Justin Hills and drummer Gabe Barham—revealed themselves to be in a possession of a heightened, and incredibly sharp, melodic sensibility, and developed into a unit that was able to bring the post-hardcore fury one minute and deliver a beautifully crafted, hooky pop-rocker the next. Their new and fifth full-length, *Gossip* (due Sept. 22), continues this evolution, resulting in their most melodic and compositionally mature record yet.

"I think we're playing to our strengths on this one," Fowler says. As for the sound of the music, he continues, "it's not hard rock, it's not emo rock, it's just a straight-up rock and roll record. We wanted to really make something that →

Jack Fowler

was electric and timeless, while at the same time breaking some barriers."

Some of those broken barriers, as it turns out, had to do with guitars. "There are certain songs on the record where I'd sit in a room with [*producer*] David Bendeth and he'd be like, 'Hey, at the end of this song let's just turn on every pedal and go for it,' " Fowler recalls. "So all the weird noises and stuff you hear on the record, in songs like 'Gossip' and 'Empire to Ashes,' it's things that sound like samples but they're not. It was a lot of just sitting in a room with Bendeth and cranking out crazy sounds and crazy ideas, because that's the kind of producer he is. He definitely took us all out of our comfort zones."

Songwriting-wise, Fowler points to two songs on *Gossip*—the anthemic first single, "Legends," and a swelling, atmospheric ballad titled "Hole in My Heart"—as standouts. Regarding the former, he says, "I could listen to it every single day and it wouldn't get old." As for "Hole in My Heart," he continues, "It has this eerie, dark sound, but Kellin does these really high little Seventies throwback, Zeppelin-style runs. Onstage I can just see it with production and projections and fire and all the fun stuff we're gonna be doing soon. I can't wait to play these songs live."

When it comes to playing live, Fowler, an avowed guitar nerd, says that he tends to bring as many as eight to 10 instruments out on the road with him, to make sure he always has "the perfect guitar for the song." He estimates that his collection has swelled to somewhere between 30 and 40 instruments at this point, many of which can be seen in the photos he posts on his Instagram feed. "All my friends see the photos and joke around, like, 'Just give me one!' " he says with a laugh. "But I can't get rid of them. I'm literally a guitar hoarder. I hold on to everything.

"I guess I'm just a very unsatisfied guitar player," Fowler continues. "I always think there's something out there that sounds better than what you have, and I'm always trying to find it. I'm constantly in search of the perfect sound...and I feel like I'm getting there."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Epiphone Elitist 1963 ES-335 Dot reissue, PRS Custom 22, 1960s-era Gibson SG, 1960s-era Fender Stratocaster "George"
- **AMP** Diezel, Tyler, Naylor 50-watt, Friedman
- **EFFECTS** Strymon BigSky, Strymon Mobius, Strymon Timeline, T-Rex Whirly Verb... "The list goes on and on. We used so many."

WHAT'S ON MY PLAYLIST

MIKE ORLANDO
ADRENALINE MOB

1
"Dystopia"
Megadeth
"Just a great metal song from beginning to end along with a great tone. I've always been a fan of Dave Mustaine and the guys and [*lead guitarist*] Kiko Loureiro does a fantastic job on this song."

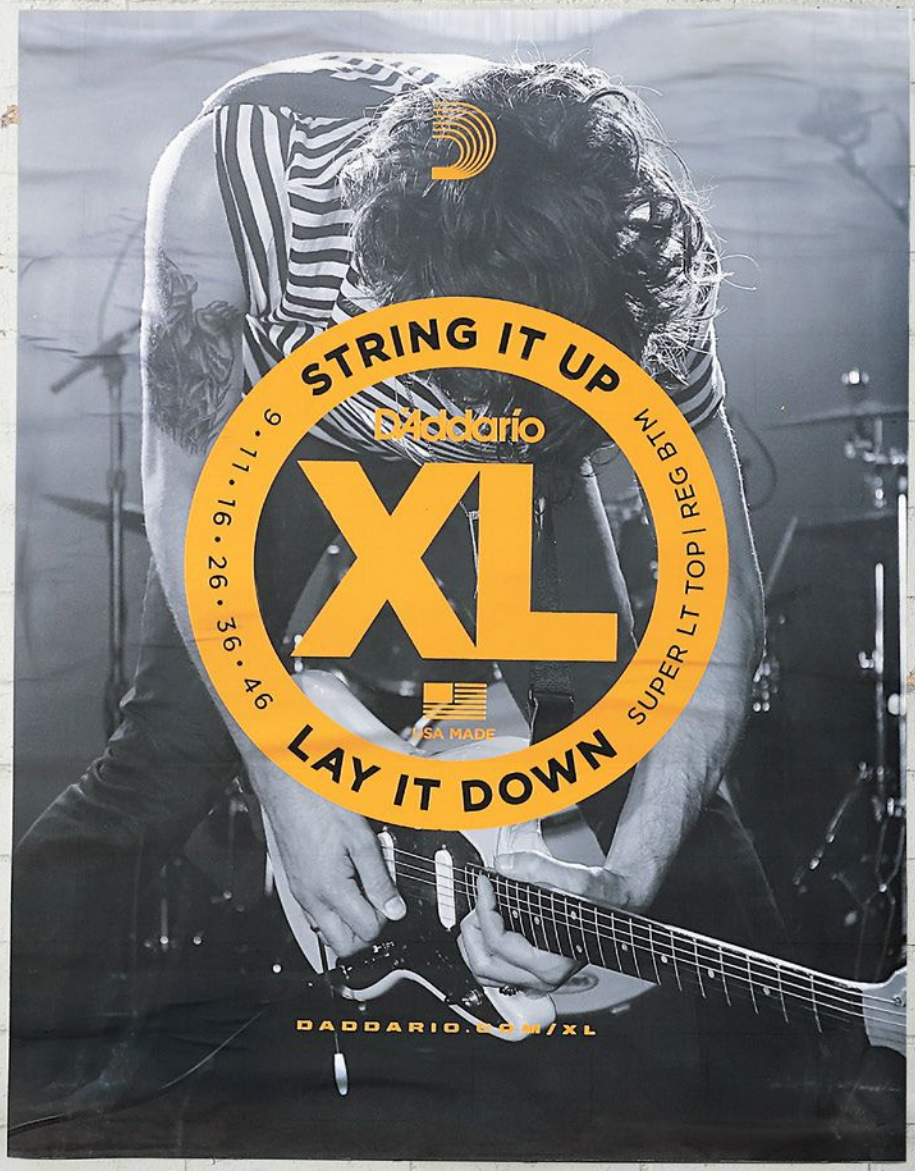
2
"Cupid's Dead"
Extreme
"I've always loved Nuno Bettencourt's attack and staccato-muted style of approaching rhythms and soloing. Great groove and definitely a track that just makes me want to grab the guitar and start digging in."

3
"The Devil's Bleeding Crown"
Volbeat
"Love the groove and flow on this track. The vocal melody definitely got me singing along right off the bat."

4
"Duality"
Slipknot
"Pure aggression at its finest. I always go back and crank up Slipknot *Vol. 3* when I need a good thrashing. Love the production and some of my favorite drum sounds as well."

5
"Running on Empty"
Jackson Browne
"I grew up listening to Jackson Browne because my older sister loved him. This became one of my favorite tracks and every time I hear David Lindley killing it on the lap steel guitar it brings me back to a wonderful time."

ADRENALINE MOB'S LATEST ALBUM, *WE THE PEOPLE*, IS OUT NOW VIA CENTURY MEDIA.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(from left) Kyle Seely, Tina Halladay, Hart Seely, Ian Dykstra and Matt Palmer

Sheer Mag

AFTER A TRIO OF WELL-RECEIVED EPS, THE PHILLY-BASED PUNK ROCKERS WITH A SEVENTIES EDGE RELEASE THEIR DEBUT FULL-LENGTH, *NEED TO FEEL YOUR LOVE*.

by Gregory Adams

CONSIDERING THE bend-heavy, Seventies guitar hero dynamics infused into Sheer Mag's *Need to Feel Your Love*, the band's debut LP is primed to be pumped out of basements still lined with bong water–soaked shag carpets. While lead guitarist Kyle Seely confesses to *Guitar World* that he's not much of a toker, the album's perma-baked sound could have something to do with the stoners that set up shop beneath the band's North Philly practice space. That is, at least before the 420-friendly operation got everyone thrown out of the building earlier this year.

"This group of weed activists had a massive 'smoke-easy,' like a speak easy," the guitarist explains with a laugh of the illicit situation that's temporarily put his project out on the street. "The SWAT team came and busted it. They seized, like, four guns, 200 pounds of weed, and 70 pounds of weed edibles. They shut the whole building down. The building managers were like, 'You'll be back in two weeks once we get it back to code.' That was two months ago."

Like Sheer Mag's potent trio of EPs, *Need to Feel Your Love* cuts like "Rank and File" and "Just Can't Get Enough" have Seely and rhythm guitarist Matt Palmer tight-rolling punk politics with Thin Lizzy–style riff rock ("It's an obvious comparison that people make to our music, I can't deny it," Seely says of the latter). But the longer runtime also has the band flexing outside of their comfort zone, whether its Seely chicly conjuring Nile Rodgers' funky sway on the discofied title track, or ripping into Mick Mars–leaning whammy bar leads on the Sunset Strip–style power stomp, "Turn It Up."

"We had to reel that one back in a little bit," the six-stringer says of the latter, saying its Eighties metal edge had to be sanded down slightly to become more than just pastiche. "It's probably the heaviest song we have. That guitar solo—the Floyd Rose dive bombs, and shit like that—that's a guilty pleasure of mine. That shit's sick!"

Though Seely was concerned about the genre-hopping on *Need to Feel Your Love*, the songs are still united by the lo-fi 8-track treatment he and co-producer/band bassist Hart Seely gave the sessions. Likewise, all are compact, well-crafted cuts that back the beautifully bristly, bluesy wails of vocalist Tina Halladay. While Seely can run wild on his fretboard—a leftover from initially picking up a bass in his teens to tackle "decadent" Primus runs—the guitarist will always take songcraft over soloing.

"We were both sort of into the flashiest playing of any type of instrument," he recalls. "We both sort of gradually moved into punk and hardcore, and realized, 'Oh, just playing the most insane shit is not always the coolest thing to do.' "

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** (Seely) Fender Deluxe Nashville Telecaster, Schecter Hellraiser with active EMGs, Gibson SG standard, 1985 Fender Squire Katana; (Palmer) Peavey T-60 1980 natural ash.
- **AMP** (Seely) 1982 JCM 800, 2x12 Marshall Cab; (Palmer) Fender Hot Rod Deville II 60-watt 2x12
- **EFFECTS** (Seely) Boss TU-3 Chromatic Tuner, Xotic SP compressor, Boss Super Chorus, Boss GE-7 Equalizer; (Palmer) Boss TU-3 Chromatic Tuner, Electro-Harmonix Soul Food

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NITA STRAUSS OF ALICE COOPER

VENUE: Paramount Theatre **DATE:** June 12, 2017 **LOCATION:** Denver, CO

Interview by RICHARD BIENSTOCK

"BRUTAL PLANET"

"The band members pushed super-hard to have this be the opener on this tour. We were doing 'The Black Widow' for about a year and a half, and before that we did 'Hello Hooray.' We wanted to change it up and give this show a heavy opening and really come out swinging. And this song definitely does that."

"NO MORE MR. NICE GUY"

"It's a classic. Not everyone's gonna know 'Brutal Planet,' but 'Nice Guy' definitely brings the casual fan in."

"PAIN"

"We just started doing this one last month. I love this song. The lyrics are what really gets me. Alice is such an amazing lyricist: 'I'm the holes in your arms when you're feeling the shakes/I'm the lump on your head when you step on the rake.' He compares himself to all these kinds of pain in your life. I'm there playing the song every single night and I'm thinking, Wow, this is very prolific!"

"BILLION DOLLAR BABIES"

"One of the coolest things with this one is how we use the three-guitar approach with myself, Ryan Roxie and Tommy Henriksen. Everyone's doing something different and adding to the song. One person's playing the high octave, one person's playing the low octave and one person's playing the chords. It just turns into a very musical thing."

"THE WORLD NEEDS GUTS"

"I love doing this one. Getting to play the Kane [*Roberts, former Alice Cooper guitarist*] stuff is a blast for me as a guitarist. It's a lot of fun. And it's also challenging. It gives me a chance to exercise my guitar playing."

"POISON"

"I do my solo leading into 'Poison.' It's interesting for me to do something like that completely by myself, because I never have before. And you would think as a guitar player that would be your dream, but it was actually really nerve wracking for me at first! But I'm glad I have that chance, because if I can do that I can do anything. [*laughs*] And then we go straight into 'Poison' from there."

"HALO OF FLIES"

"It's from that sort of darker period of Alice that not everyone is as familiar with. I love doing this one because musically there's so much going on with the three guitar players, and then the bass [*Chuck Garric*] is used almost as a fourth guitar. In the middle is Glen [*Sobel*]'s big drum solo, and then we all come back for this sort of reprise with the full band doing this cool unison thing. It's a lot of fun."

"FEED MY FRANKENSTEIN"

"This is one of my favorite songs in the set to play. And the reason I like it so much is because Joe Satriani and Steve Vai played the solos in the original version. I get to do the Steve Vai solo, and Vai is my favorite guitarist—he's the reason I started playing. So for me, to do a little Steve Vai in the set is just a blast every single night."

"I'M EIGHTEEN"

"It's one of the most memorable parts of the show for me, because you see everyone singing along, from little kids to teenagers to investment bankers and young professionals to older, white-haired men and women. The song, it has a message and a vibe that just transcends any type of person, any age, anything. Everybody remembers being 18, and all those little kids are looking forward to being 18. It's a really cool thing to be a part of and to be able to see from the stage every night."

"SCHOOL'S OUT"

"It's so much fun because it's such a crowd participation song. And we have so much stuff going on while we're playing it. There are these big bubbles that Alice pops with a sword. There's people coming onstage and throwing balloons out. We do a little bit of Pink Floyd. We have a singalong part. It's just this crazy way to end the whole set."

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PHOTO BY DUSTIN JACK

Kenny Wayne Shepherd

WITH *LAY IT ON DOWN*, THE BLUES GUITAR CHAMP BROADENS HIS MUSICAL HORIZONS

by Joe Bosso

TWENTY-THREE YEARS into his career, modern blues star Kenny Wayne Shepherd had a single overarching goal for his eighth studio album, *Lay It On Down*: "I wanted to make the best record I've ever made," he says. "To do that, I had to get out of my comfort zone. I worked with a new producer, Marshall Altman, and I wrote with a bunch of people I've never worked with before. I put myself in situations where I had to react differently, and that made the whole thing pretty exciting."

Shepherd's last solo album, 2014's *Goin' Home*, was an all-covers, all-blues affair, but *Lay It On Down* is comprised of all-original material that spans country ("Hard Lesson Learned"), horn-infused R&B ("Diamonds & Gold") and rootsy rock and roll ("Baby Got Gone"). "I went in a more contemporary direction on this album," he explains. "It shows diversity within the band but also the genre of blues. Blues is the foundation, but it runs deep. It's there in country and soul. You don't have to play straight blues to be playing a form of blues."

Over the years, the guitarist has held his own beside players like Joe Satriani, Steve Vai and his Rides bandmate Stephen Stills, but he insists that flash playing took a backseat to in-the-pocket grooves on *Lay It On Down*. "I didn't feel the need to show people every lick that I know on these songs," he says. "Sometimes that's appropriate, but other times you play to the material. My objective here was to put across great tunes and great stories. But there's a few tunes where I smoke on guitar—'Ride of Your Life' definitely called for a lot of heat."

While Shepherd doesn't label himself a purist, he and Altman went old school and recorded the new album to analog tape. "That was really about making ourselves happy with the end result," Shepherd says. "Whether listeners can detect the subtle differences with tape, I don't know, but we feel that we're giving the people something that's sonically superior. And that impacts how you play while you work, so in the end the product is just better."

AXOLOGY

- **GUITARS** Various Fender Stratocasters (1958, 1959, 1961), Fender Kenny Wayne Shepherd signature series Stratocaster, Gibson Custom Shop Firebird, Gibson Custom Shop Les Paul, Les Paul Axcess, Martin KWS-16 signature series acoustic-electric
- **AMP** Vox Clyde McCoy wah, Ibanez Tube Screamer, Tycobrahe Octavia, Analog Man King of Tone overdrive, Analog Man Bi-Chorus, original Uni-Vibe, Jam Pedals Llama delay
- **EFFECTS** Fender 1965 and 1967 "Blackface" Bandmasters, Fender 1959 tweed Bassman, Fender tweed 1957 Deluxe, Fender 1964 "Blackface" Vibroverb (all customized by Alexander Dumble)

THE MAN WHO DROVE A NAIL

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LAURA JANE GRACE OF AGAINST ME!

She's a singer, songwriter, punk lifer, LGBTQ activist, book author and avid Rickenbacker collector, but what *Guitar World* readers really want to know is...

Interview by Brad Angle

Q: I'VE NOTICED YOU USE A LOT OF NON-TRADITIONAL CHORD SHAPES THAT ALLOW A LOT OF OPEN NOTES TO RING OUT. SONGS SUCH AS "I STILL LOVE YOU JULIE" AND "THOSE ANARCHO PUNX ARE MYSTERIOUS" COME TO MIND SPECIFICALLY. WAS THIS BORN OUT OF NECESSITY OR A HAPPY ACCIDENT? *—ADAM*

It wasn't an accident by any means, but I think necessity is the wrong word. It was more kind of this naivety when you're first starting to play guitar and write songs and realize, Dang it, every song I write feels like there's only a certain amount of chords that I can draw from. So you start experimenting with different structures and chord shapes and thinking you're reinventing the wheel, but really you're just making an A chord in a different way. [*laughs*] But it adds different sounds to it, so figuring out different approaches is really valuable.

Q: When I watched the "Thrash Unreal" video [*from 2007's* New Wave], I got goosebumps when the water started pouring down on your Rickenbacker and James [*Bowman's*] Les Paul. I felt like I was watching guitar abuse! Were the guitars ruined?
—Aimee Cole

[*laughs*] Actually that was kind of our grand scheme on how to scam the record label. But let me preface that by saying I *hate* that video. [*laughs*] I think it's a terrible video. It was a compromised treatment. We wanted to do one thing and the label was like, No. So we ended up going along with this plan that we didn't want to do. But then when we were reading that they were going to be raining down fake wine on us and getting our instruments wet, I was like, "Well, let's work money into the budget to get our guitars replaced." So we did the video shoot and immediately went outside and dried our guitars. [*laughs*] We took all the hardware off and set them in the sun and they were fine! The inside of the Rickenbacker that I played during the video is now dyed red, but other than that it's totally fine. And I got a free guitar, another Rickenbacker, out of the shoot.

Q: You've played Rickenbacker 360s in the past and seemed to have moved to Fender. Why the change? What is your number-one guitar right now? ***—Greg Butcher***

Initially starting out I was always drawn more to Fender than Gibson. I feel like that's the divide people have when they're first starting out. I always liked the twangy, chime-y sounds of the Telecaster. I think my first proper electric guitar was a Squire Telecaster. I was always drawn to Rickenbackers because they had that same jangly sound and are also beautiful looking instruments. But they're also really expensive instruments, so that's a downside. But I collect Rickenbackers; I have like 10 of them and I always have at least one out on the road with me. But I do love Fenders. With *Shape Shift with Me* I ended up using a Fender Coronado II pretty much for the whole thing. I was really impressed with that guitar. In addition to the Fenders and the Rickenbackers, I've been playing Nash stuff. Those three are my main go-tos, except for acoustic, and then I go Gibson.

Q: Last year's *Shape Shift with Me* was the first studio record that both Atom [*Willard, drums*] and Inge [*Johansson, bass*] appeared on. Did you take any new approaches in writing the music, collectively and/or on your own? ***—Jace***

Yes. It was way more of a collaborative effort. This record was pretty much written on tour. We'd go out on tour and come back and I'd have skeletons for two or three songs written. Then we'd work them out as a band, record them and then go back on tour. It was a way more fluid process and that's what I wanted, because the record before that [*2014's* Transgender Dysphoria Blues] was a really closed up experience and I felt like I had to have a stranglehold on it.

Q: Why did you start playing guitar and who were your first inspirations?
—Dan MacInally

I started playing guitar when I was eight years old. I mowed lawns until I had enough money to buy a Harmony acoustic guitar out of a Sears catalog. My first musical awakening moment was seeing Madonna on TV, but beyond that I got really into the hair metal bands of the Eighties. I was obsessed with Guns N' Roses and Skid Row and I wanted to be in a band. So I convinced my parents to get me guitar lessons and went from there.

Q: As a transgender female myself, and an alt-rock fangirl, I love your music and everything you've done. Thank you for being an inspiring figure. Is there any Against Me! song that you'd want to redo, or you feel carries a different message to what you want?
—Katy Lawson

I'd love to redo our whole first record [*2002's* Against Me! Is Reinventing Axl Rose]. [*laughs*] Maybe the third, too [*2005's* Searching for a Former Clarity]. From regrettful choices in snare drum tones to the fact that we were just starting out. Our first record cost $800 to make and we recorded and mixed it in a day and a half. So you're just going in there totally rushed and learning the ropes on how to make a record. The older songs that we do still play have changed and

(from left) Atom Willard, Laura Jane Grace, Inge Johansson and James Bowman

evolved and I think that's the value in doing live records, especially if, like with my band, there's been lineup changes over the years. Being able to give a presentation of older songs that's more representative of the band you are today is great.

Q: My ex, who is a trans girl, is the lead guitarist and composer in a metal band. She's come out to her bandmate, however, she's afraid to be out in public because she thinks it'll ruin her band's chance of making it. Do you think the punk/metal community has become more accepting of trans-fronted acts? ***—Wren***

I think there's definite progress being made for sure. Someone that really inspired me with coming out is Mina Caputo who sings in Life of Agony. In rock and roll's history there's always been people blurring gender lines. That's what attracted me to the bands I liked as a kid like Guns N' Roses and Skid Row. Oftentimes I'd look at them and think, I can't tell if this is a boy or girl. I think through visibility you make progress.

Q: Your singing style is powerful, gritty, aggressive and distinctive but very comprehensible and passionate. How did you develop your singing voice? Who were your main singing influences? ***—Erik Chevrier-Langevin***

Starting out playing in punk bands in particular you don't really know what you're doing. And that's kind of the appeal of punk rock. When you're starting out and playing just one show a month it's a lot more feasible for you to just scream at the top of your lungs. But you learn really quick when you start recording in studios and touring that you have to learn how to sing. You need to learn breath control and how to preserve your voice if you expect to be doing it for a long time. When I was younger my two vocal heroes were Jim Morrison and Axl Rose. There's a certain quality that Axl Rose has that's like this real guttural *raaaaahhhh* thing. It's a trebly vocal thing that I'm always attracted to. Same thing with Kathleen Hanna from Bikini Kill and Jesse Michaels from Operation Ivy. It's so biting and good.

Q: As a grrrl guitarist, I struggle with a lot of dudes hounding me about my rig and my playing style, and they don't even bother bringing it up around their fellow male counterparts! What is your personal way of dealing with weird elitist gear bros? ***—Vi Mayugba***

[*laughs*] I guess I'm lucky that I'm kind of insulated, and that we have a great guitar tech that tours with us. So I'm kind of cut off from dealing with other people in that capacity. But I'm also more of the style of player where it's like, Does it work? Awesome. Does it not work? Why the fuck not. [*laughs*] Those are about my only questions. When people start asking me technical stuff I just kinda blank. [*laughs*]

Q: What are some essentials you never tour without? Also what kind of eyeliner/eye shadow do you use. It looks awesome! ***—Alex***

[*laughs*] Smashbox eyeliner right now. [*laughs*] For tour essentials, it goes without saying in this day and age everyone has their cell phone and computer. But I always make sure I have a good book, my journal and my acoustic guitar. You're good to go from there. I try to be a minimalist. The more you bring the more you're responsible for carrying around and making sure it's organized on the tour bus...and that's like living on a submarine with limited space.

Q: What are some key factors for success for up and coming bands? ***—Spencer Shelton***

Be willing to play for anyone, anywhere, anytime. And no joke, practice all the time. Learn every single aspect of what you do. Be open to criticism and take advice from other people. Pay attention to how other people do it. Take notes; see what works for you and see what doesn't. Those old clichés—like, How do you get to Carnegie Hall? Practice, practice, practice—are true. And don't sell your publishing rights!

Q:

I FOUND YOUR HEARTBREAKINGLY RIOTOUS ACOUSTIC RECORD [AGAINST ME! 2001 EP] A DOZEN YEARS BACK. ONLY LATER DID I BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH YOUR EQUALLY PHENOMENAL FULL-FLEDGED SOUND. ANY PLANS TO RETURN TO THE MORE STRIPPED-DOWN SOUND? ***—AMANDA Y***

I'd love to. I love doing a full band tour but then breaking away and doing a solo acoustic show. I'm a real strong believer in the idea that if the song is really good then it has to be able to hold its own with just a voice and an acoustic guitar. So I always approach the start of the song in that way to see if it works on an acoustic guitar. As long as you have that base and know that it's solid you're usually pretty good to go. But yeah I'm sure I'll eventually get around to doing another record that's just stripped down like that.

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Mario Cabrera

Erick Hansel

CHON

SAN DIEGO INSTRUMENTAL UPSTARTS CONTINUE BREAKING RULES WITH *HOMEY.*

By Mike Huguenor

EARLY CHON SHOWS must have been bewildering to those in attendance. The three-piece emerged on the San Diego scene in 2008 playing an unheard-of mix of tech-death and jazz fusion. They had no vocalist, no bass player and ranged in age from 11 to 17.

"We knew it was sick but no one else knew even what was happening," says Mario Cabrera, one of the band's two guitarists. "People were like, 'what's going on?' "

That year, CHON recorded their first set of songs and released it as *Demo 2008*. The EP quickly got the attention of listeners online due to its blazing speed and sheer technicality, and CHON soon found themselves with a growing national fanbase. But the demo was really only a hint at what the band would become.

In 2014 CHON began to tour, opening for prog-metal favorites Animals as Leaders. Increasingly inspired by fusion and jazz music, Mario and fellow guitarist Erick Hansel had by that time established a unique philosophy for their guitar playing.

"We get a lot of ideas from pianists," says Cabrera. "We think of it as like one of us is the left hand on a piano player, and the other is the right hand. It's one guitar part, but it takes two guitars to play it."

On their first full-length, 2015's *Grow*, it's often difficult to pick out what one guitar is doing, as both rely heavily on the other to complete musical phrases. It's less tech-heavy than the demo, but no less technical, and creates a kind of genre-less space where melody and energy are the focal points.

The recent follow-up, *HOMEY*, is likely to produce the same "what's going on?" reaction from listeners as the band received from their earliest concert audiences. The album is heavily influenced by electronic music, including many tracks with guest producers, MIDI synths, and glitchy drum tracks.

"We just wanted to get into different realms of sound," says Cabrera. "We're just trying to take it further."

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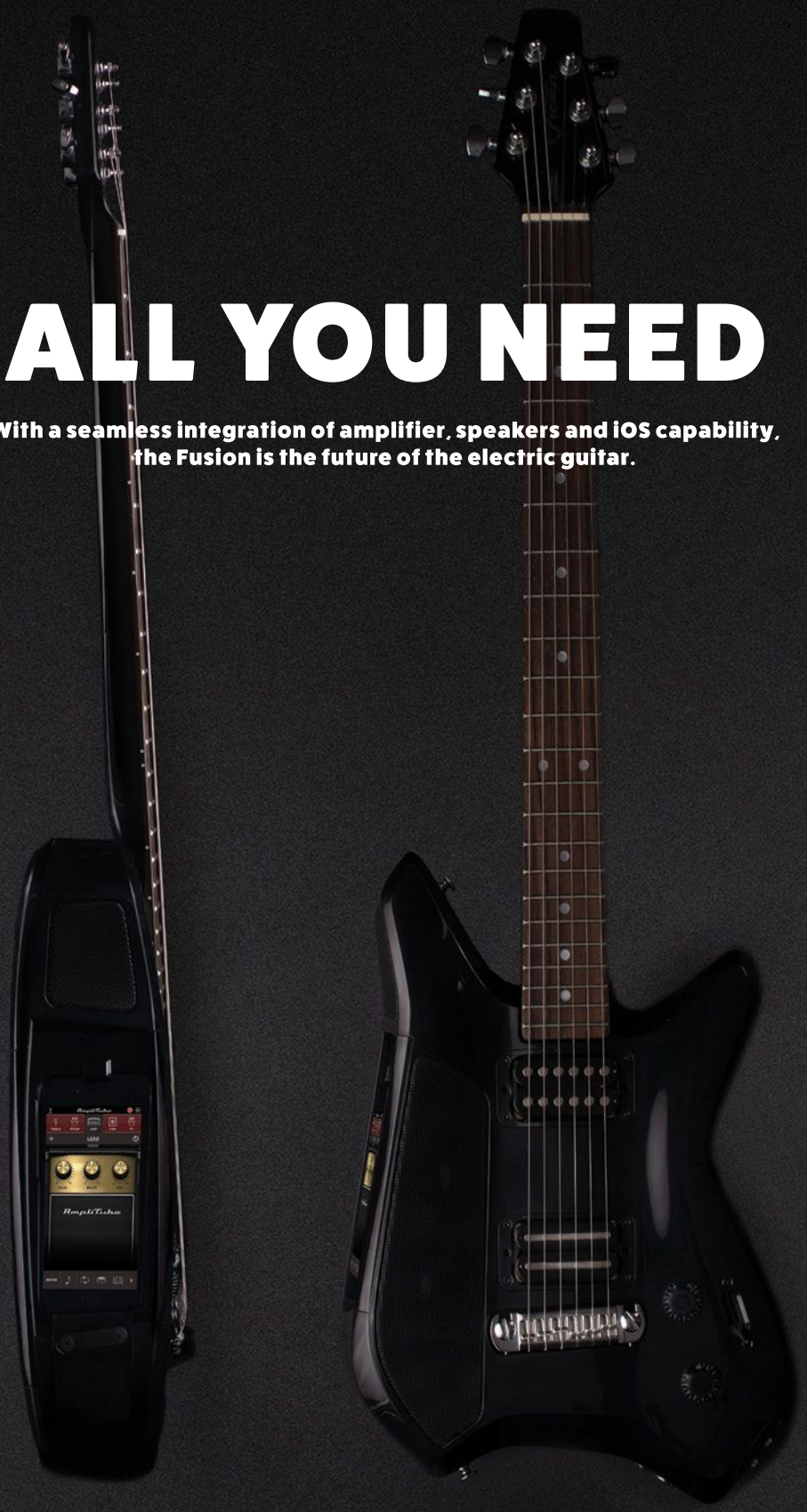

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Aerosmith guitarist **JOE PERRY** announces the release of his signature Custom Monster Rocker Blaster boom box.

MASTER BLASTER

BY *Andy Aledort*

ONE WOULD BE HARD PRESSED TO FIND A BETTER AUTHORITY ON THE SOUND OF ROCK MUSIC THAN LEGENDARY AEROSMITH GUITARIST AND CO-LEADER **JOE PERRY**.

Reigning at the helm of this iconic band since its inception in 1971, Joe Perry has set the bar for pure, unadulterated hard rock guitar via songs like "Walk This Way," "Sweet Emotion," "Dream On" and "Back in the Saddle," and masterpiece albums like *Get Your Wings*, *Toys in the Attic*, *Rocks*, *Draw the Line*, *Permanent Vacation* and *Pump*. Perry has recently joined forces with Monster Products for the design and release of the Joe Perry Custom Monster Rocker Blaster, an updated, rocked-out version of Monster's original, critically acclaimed boom box. The Joe Perry edition Monster Rocker Blaster is specially tuned by Joe for the optimal reproduction of classic rock and will feature a "royal rock" gold finish and handcrafted nameplates. Additionally, the first 200 Monster Rocker Blasters will be hand signed by Joe himself.

"I've had a great relationship with Noel [*Lee, founder of Monster Products*] for a very long time," says Perry. "We could tell from the start his guitar cables were definitely a notch above everything else out there, in terms of sound and durability. Over the years, Monster have always been the 'go-to' guys for us.

"Over time, they branched out into home audio and car audio products, and I could see just how great all of these other products were and how great they sounded. They have giant speaker cables for home audio systems that probably have a quarter pound of copper in them. The breadth and scope of their products, from battery chargers on up, is impressive, so it was a natural progression for them to get into headphones and boom boxes. I was glad to work with them on this new signature boom box, the Rocker Blaster.

"We all saw the Beats headphones take off, and Monster's Element Bluetooth headphones are a perfect compliment to that market," Joe continues. "The Beats are great for rap and have all of that low-end you need for that music, but, to my ears, they weren't perfectly suited to rock music. Noel said, 'We gotta get back to the roots and make a product designed for the sound of classic rock.' I worked with Monster on the Element headphones, specifically with the faithful reproduction of classic rock music in mind. And they did a great job—they sound fantastic."

Monster has had their Monster Blaster boom box on the market for a while, and it does an incredible job at reproducing the low end while not sacrificing the clarity of the midrange, which is where so many of the frequencies of classic rock reside. "For the last year, I've had a prototype of the new signature boom box, and I've taken it with me around the world. I love it. With the Signature model, we've added a few tweaks to the sound, assuring that the bass sounds big but flat, so it won't over saturate the other frequencies, and the mids will be a little more present. With all of the music we love—Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin—it's about the sound of the guitar and the vocals, which is all up there in the midrange. That stuff has gotten buried on a lot of 'modern' systems, because too much bass will cloud it up. We've tightened up the overall sound of the bass, and also added a 'bass boost' too. For example, if you listen to rock music that is pre-1966, like some of the old Byrds stuff, the bass is pretty light on those records. The 'bass boost' will add more depth to the sound and make it sound richer and wider."

How much collaboration took place between Joe and Monster in designing his signature boom box? "We spent a lot of time getting it right," says Perry. "We sat in a room with their principle engineers and tuned the box by listening to all different kinds of music, and some very specific records, through it, getting it to sound just right. We listened to everything from early Elvis Presley records to dance stuff from the last couple of years, and the latest electronic music of today. Technically, the box will reproduce whatever you put into it."

The Joe Perry Signature Monster Rocker Blaster, like the standard Blaster, has features like special Indoor and EQ Modes, a rechargeable battery for up to 12 hours of continuous listening, bi-directional driver design with full-range drivers in angled 360-degree orientation, a down-firing integrated powered subwoofer, and it's completely waterproof and splash-proof. "This box is perfect for the road," says Perry. "It's been everywhere with me. There are no knobs on it to break, it's Bluetooth-compatible, and it's virtually indestructible."

Having spent the greater part of his lifetime working in recording studios with Aerosmith and his solo projects, Joe is accustomed to the pursuit of the purest and most accurate reproduction of sound of his signature guitar tone as well as the overall sound of the band. "There are people who spend hundreds of thousands of dollars on home sound systems, and that's great if that's what you are after and you can afford it. My goal in working with Monster on this box was to make something that sounds incredible but is also affordable. When you compare the cost of the Monster Rocker Blaster to comparable devices, it's much more in line with what most people can afford. This box offers a lot of sound reproduction for the money."

Another consideration is the changing trends in musical tastes. "The sound of classic rock is only expanding," says Perry. "There are so many new bands that are going after the classic rock sound of the Sixties and Seventies, and people are listening to the old records more than ever. I wanted

both the latest records and the old classics to sound as full and rich as possible. Kids are also discovering the sound of vinyl, and there's been a huge resurgence in the popularity of the vinyl format.

"Monster said, let's push a reset button here and get back to the sound that we have all loved for so many years. 'Classic rock' can be different things to different people. Is it 'All Right Now' by Free, or is it 'Stairway to Heaven'? Those are top-of-the-charts songs that get a lot of plays, but there is a lot of great music that I think of as 'classic rock' that is very different from that. I'm a guitar player, so the stuff I gravitated to was all of the stuff that we were jamming to, like Jimi, Jeff Beck and Cream. I feel this box recreates the sound of the recordings in line with the way the artists wanted it to sound. When you listen to *Exile on Main St*, you want to hear some bottom but not at the expense of the guitars. If you have a $10,000 stereo, you will get that, but you can get that kind of clarity with this box, too.

"Another important thing is that the boxes are true stereo; when you listen to Jimi Hendrix's guitar solos, you clearly hear the extreme panning effects that are there on the record. Whether listening with the Blaster boom box, the Element headphones or the high-performance ear buds, the kind of music I love sounds great. If I don't love something, I won't put my name on it, and I'm happy to have my name on this product."

At the time of this writing, Aerosmith have embarked on the first leg of their *Aero-Vederci Baby!* Tour, which contrary to some reports is not necessarily a farewell tour. "We are keeping our options open," says Perry. "Our road manager, Tommy Higgins, came up with the name, and Steven and I said, 'Not bad—let's see what it looks like on the back of a bathrobe.' "

"We've added a bunch of tunes to the sets that we haven't brought out in quite a while," continues the guitarist. "We even pulled out the old set lists from way back. We've added 'Let the Music Do the Talking' and 'Young Lust,' plus some good rockers, like Fleetwood Mac's, 'Oh Well,' which sounded *smokin'* in rehearsal. We've been ending with 'Sweet Emotion' for years, so we moved it up into the middle of the set. There are certain songs that have to be there, but we've worked in five open slots for different tunes, so we can change the feel and vibe of the show on any given night."

The band began the tour in Israel on May 16 and will continue through Russia, France, Germany, Poland, Denmark, Sweden, the U.K., Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, Ecuador, Chile, Brazil and Argentina, with plans for an extensive U.S. tour to follow. GW

(from left) Tim Henson, Clay Gober, Clay Aeschliman and Scott LePage

Mix Masters

Their unique combination of shred, EDM, hip-hop and other genres makes them impossible to categorize and therefore worthy of attention. Introducing POLYPHIA, rising stars of the instrumental guitar scene.

by RICHARD BIENSTOCK

POLYPHIA'S MOST RECENT SONG AND VIDEO, for their 2016 track "Lit," kicks off in a manner similar to that of many instrumental shred bands—with the camera showing the group's two guitarists, Tim Henson and Scott LePage, simultaneously picking out a twisty, fleet-fingered repeating harmony lick high up on the necks of their guitars. But within seconds, the tune veers off into unusual territory—the percussion track lights up with electronic burbles, twinkling keyboards and sampled sounds poke through the mix, and the guitars are chopped and cut with EDM-style hiccups. Visually, meanwhile, a young man who is the focal point of the video dances along to the almost poppy rhythm as various shapes and colors radiate off his body.

All the while, Henson and LePage, who, in the clip at least, look like they'd be more at home in a new-millennium boy band than a metal-tinged instrumental act, rip out virtuosic runs and solos full of lightning-fast licks, whammy bar flutters and liquid harmony lines. It's an unusual approach to shred, though one that has over the last few years led the Texas-based outfit to become one of the sub-genre's brightest new stars.

To date, Polyphia, which also currently includes bassist Clay Gober and drummer Clay Aeschliman, have racked up millions of YouTube views for their various videos and guitar playthrough clips and shared stages with the likes of Periphery, Animals As Leaders, Between the Buried and Me and August Burns Red. They've also released two full-length albums, 2014's *Muse* and 2016's *Renaissance*, that, in terms of the bright, often major-key melodies and slippery, cleanly picked shred lines, recall the sort of sound made famous by players like Joe Satriani and, at times, Steve Vai. At the same time, in the music's incorporation of decidedly non-rock elements, in particular hip-hop, pop and EDM, it sounds not quite like anything else in the shred universe today.

As for how the very young band (Henson and LePage formed Polyphia in high school in 2010) came upon their sound, LePage says it's merely a natural outgrowth of their musical interests. "The main goal for us is just to have fun," he explains. "We want to make music that sounds like the music we love, which is hip-hop and pop and all that stuff, and do it with the guitar. Tim's main influences are Jimi Hendrix and stuff like that. And I'm super into Stevie Ray Vaughan. So we certainly have our pentatonic-scale guitar-player influences. And then we're trying to put that together with the whole world of hip-hop and electronic-based music. Because we think both of those things are cool as fuck, you know?"

That said, Henson stresses, "It's not that we're consciously trying to bring this style of guitar playing into these other types of music. It's more like, 'This is what we do.' This is the kind of music we want to make at this point in time, but we've been doing music all our lives."

Henson has in fact been doing music for more or less his whole life. Growing up in the Dallas suburb of Plano, Texas, he began playing violin at the age of three. "But I hated it," he says with a laugh. "My mom forced it on me and I did not like it at all." At 10, his father introduced him to guitar. "My dad had played a little bit, and he pulled one out and I was like, 'Wow, that's really cool.' I asked if I could try it. I'd thought since I could play violin I'd be really good at guitar, but I was terrible! But I decided that was what I wanted to do, because I thought rock music was way cooler than classical. And from there I pretty much spent every second, from 10 to 15 years old, doing nothing but playing guitar."

LePage, who also grew up in Plano, started at the same age. "My dad also played guitar," he recalls, "and when I was 10 I remember watching him one day, just shredding and making cool sounds, and thinking, I wanna do *that*. After that, I would wait for him to come home from work so he could teach me songs. After a while I would try to figure them out on my own, by ear."

To this last point, both Henson and LePage are for the most part self-taught, a fact that, given how advanced their abilities were at such young ages, is unusual, to say the least. Both claim, however, that it just came down to spending a lot of time woodshedding. "I would just play CDs and click the rewind button and try to figure out the notes," LePage says. "I started off with the Black Sabbath album *Paranoid*, learning every song off the album by ear. It's an easier one to do that with because it's mostly pentatonic. But it really helped me paint a picture in my head of the shapes that they use, and I was able to figure everything out a lot easier. That started me on the path of getting into this whole world."

Henson, for his part, also had a particular non-musical impetus behind his guitar development. "I was a problem child, and I ended up on probation for most of high school for two possessions," he says with a laugh. "Because we live in Texas, and weed is not cool there. So I had a strict curfew, and I had nothing to do but play guitar."

As for what led the two of them down the shred-guitar path? "I don't really know," Henson admits. "It's funny because that whole style, it's not really the kind of music I enjoy listening to now. But at the time, I mean, every kid wants to play fast. It's like, 'Look at this skill I attained and all the things I can do!' "

"WE DID THE DEATHCORE-TYPE SHRED GUITAR MUSIC THING, WE DID THE KIND OF GROOVY DJENT THING, THEN WE TRIED THE POP THING. WE ALWAYS WANT TO BE DOING SOMETHING DIFFERENT."

—SCOTT LEPAGE

For Henson, his indoctrination into shred began with Paul Gilbert. "I had one of his DVDs, the one where he's dressed up like an astronaut [*2006's* Spaceship Live]. I took a couple things from that. And then I got turned on to Steve Vai and the virtuosos. From there I discovered Guthrie Govan, and I became pretty much the biggest Guthrie fanboy. That I guess accounts for a lot of the things I started playing in Polyphia."

The fact that Henson was playing this type of music in high school was all the more uncommon given the fact that another teenager, LePage, was living in the same town and doing the same thing. "Everybody always tells us it's so crazy," LePage says. "I literally live five minutes down the street from Tim, and I grew up going to school with the guy. It's funny though because we didn't really start playing guitar together until my junior year. I always knew he was a sick guitarist but we never really played music together until mutual friends linked us up. But once they did, that was it. We just connected so perfectly."

When Henson and LePage initially formed Polyphia, however, it was to pursue a sound that was markedly different from the one they have today. "We were both really into death metal and deathcore,"

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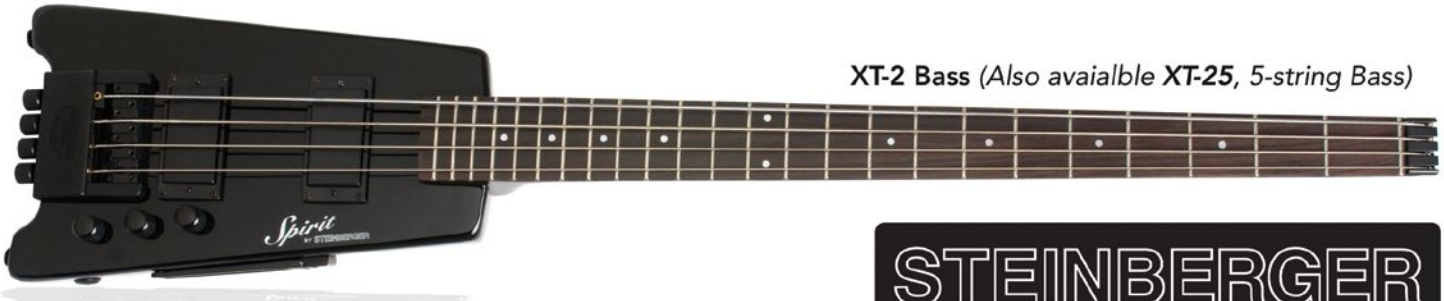

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Henson says. "We loved Whitechapel. Within the Ruins. Oceano. Heavy shit like that. And that was the first Polyphia sound—pretty much just shredding the entire time."

That sound can be heard on Polyphia's initial 2011 demo, *Resurrect*, recorded when LePage was 18 and Henson just 17. The four-song offering is jam-packed with insanely acrobatic shredding and loopy lead and harmony lines, all of it played over grinding, down-tuned riffs and rapid-fire blast-beat drumming. The sound, LePage says, was like "pretty much anything that would be on the Summer Slaughter Tour type of stuff." Initially, however, the young band wasn't sure exactly how to fully realize their style. At one point early on, they even added vocals to *Resurrect*, partly in an effort to land a slot on the roster of one of their favorite metal labels, Sumerian. "Sumerian was our dream record label at the time," Henson says. "We played a festival with another Sumerian band who liked our music, and they said, 'We're gonna tell our label to check you out. What's your email?' So Sumerian hit us up, and we were so stoked. But we opened it and literally all it said was: *Where's the singer?* So we were like, 'Fuck, guess we need a singer...' "

Polyphia did in fact create a version of *Resurrect* that featured both clean and harsh vocals, but it proved an uneasy fit for the music. "So right before we released the music we took all the vocals off and put the EP out that way," LePage says. From there, Polyphia's road forward as an instrumental act was set, even as their sound was just beginning its evolution. The band's next recording, the 2013 EP *Inspire*, found them moving away from the manic deathcore sound of their earliest days to something that was still heavy and chunky, yet infinitely more melodic. One track from that album, "Impassion," also served as their breakthrough single of sorts, after the band decided to post a guitar playthrough video that displayed every run, sweep and dive-bomb in up-close, high-def quality, to YouTube to accompany the track. To date, the clip has more than two million views.

"We did that because that was the thing to do at the time," Henson says matter-of-factly. "We went to this spot in Dallas' art district that is just a really cool-looking place, and we brought our guitars and a laptop and cameras and filmed the playthrough in public, in front of everybody. And we got a lot of traction on YouTube from it. People really liked the aesthetic of the video—even though it was total DIY."

It was with Polyphia's next recording, the 2014 full-length *Muse*, that they truly grew into the sound they're known for today, incorporating elements of pop, funk, electronic music and other styles into their shred-guitar framework. Songs like "Champagne," "Sweet Tea" and "James Franco" explode with vibrant, insanely catchy hooks and upbeat melodies, and are wrapped in a crisp production that lends the music a sleek, almost futuristic vibe. Says LePage, "Around that time we didn't really want to play fast, shreddy metal anymore. We started getting into radio songs, and that opened up this whole new world to us, like, 'Everything on the radio is catchy and sticks in my head...whether I or anybody thinks it's good or not!' We wanted to get away from the whole, 'Let's just get on the record and shred as hard as we can' kind of thing."

As for what sort of music the guys were getting into? "I discovered Drake," Henson says simply. "And to this day, right now, I listen to Drake every day. I know every lyric to every song. So it was Drake and rap and hip-hop and just generally things on the radio. In fact, that's where most of the songs on *Muse* come from. They're based on popular songs from 2014 that were on the radio. We'd pick out favorites and try to write over them."

As an example, Henson points to the standout *Muse* track "Champagne." "That song is based on [*New Orleans R&B and hip-hop artist*] August Alsina's 'I Luv This Shit,' " he explains. "I remember hearing that on the radio for the first time and it just blew my mind, because the way it was structured was *verse/pre-chorus/chorus/post-chorus*. I'd never heard something like that. I just thought it was so amazing the way it builds all this tension just to release it into a chorus, and then do it again with a post-chorus. It's just hook after hook after hook. So we pretty much wrote over this rap song and then stripped the rap song and put bass and drums to it. And it's really fun, because when you play that song and you play the guitar part from 'Champagne' over it, it lines up perfectly."

"I WAS A PROBLEM CHILD, SO I HAD A STRICT CURFEW AND I HAD NOTHING TO DO BUT PLAY GUITAR."
—TIM HENSON

Another way in which Polyphia drew inspiration from hip-hop on *Muse* was in their use of guest guitarists, which mimicked the way rap tracks are packed full of guest verses. To help out on various songs, the band tapped everyone from Intervals' Aaron Marshall ("Sweet Tea") and Chon's Mario Camarena ("Baditude") to solo shredder Nick Johnston ("Champagne") and ex–Chelsea Grin shredder Jason Richardson ("Aviator"). Says Henson, "We were like, 'Let's make this like a rap album and feature all our favorite guitarists!"

The band pulled back on the guest appearances for their second and most recent full-length, 2016's *Renaissance*, while continuing to plow even further ahead in terms of exploring non-rock sounds. So much so that these days LePage says, "We're kinda closer to the whole pop side of things than metal." As for the fact that many people still tend to think of them as a metal band, he continues, "It's kind of funny, because we're similar enough to be

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grouped in with that type of music but we're different enough to where nobody knows what tour to put us on. Because we're *not* metal anymore. At least not like we used to be."

"A lot of times with us it depends what era of the band people are listening to," Henson says. "Like, some of them go, 'Oh, yeah, Polyphia's a *djent* band.' But they're talking about the *Inspire* era." He laughs. "Or they'll say, 'Polyphia's such poppy bullshit!' But they're definitely talking about *Muse* and the more recent stuff."

This stylistic adventurism has often led to confusion about just what type of band Polyphia really is. While they're often lumped in with acts like Animals As Leaders, CHON, Intervals and the like, the fact that they're so young, that they embrace more modern pop styles, and that they don't exactly *look* like a metal or shred act has resulted in some negative reactions from fans of the genre.

To that last point, Henson says, "I guess we kind of asked for it. When we first started it was like, 'We can appeal to musicians with our music, but we want girls to like us, too!' " So we cared about how we looked. And maybe we were really dumb to do that. Because sometimes people don't even comment on our music. It's only, 'You guys look *bad*. I hate you.' " But on this next release I don't think we're going to focus on any image at all. Because it's irrelevant. It's just about the music and that's all that matters."

As far as the next release, Polyphia are currently holed up at a Detroit studio putting the finishing touches on an EP due later this year. And for fans who may have felt the EDM touches of last year's "Lit" were a step too far, be prepared. "We have songs on this upcoming EP that are straight-up hip-hop," LePage says. "Just rap beats with guitars over it."

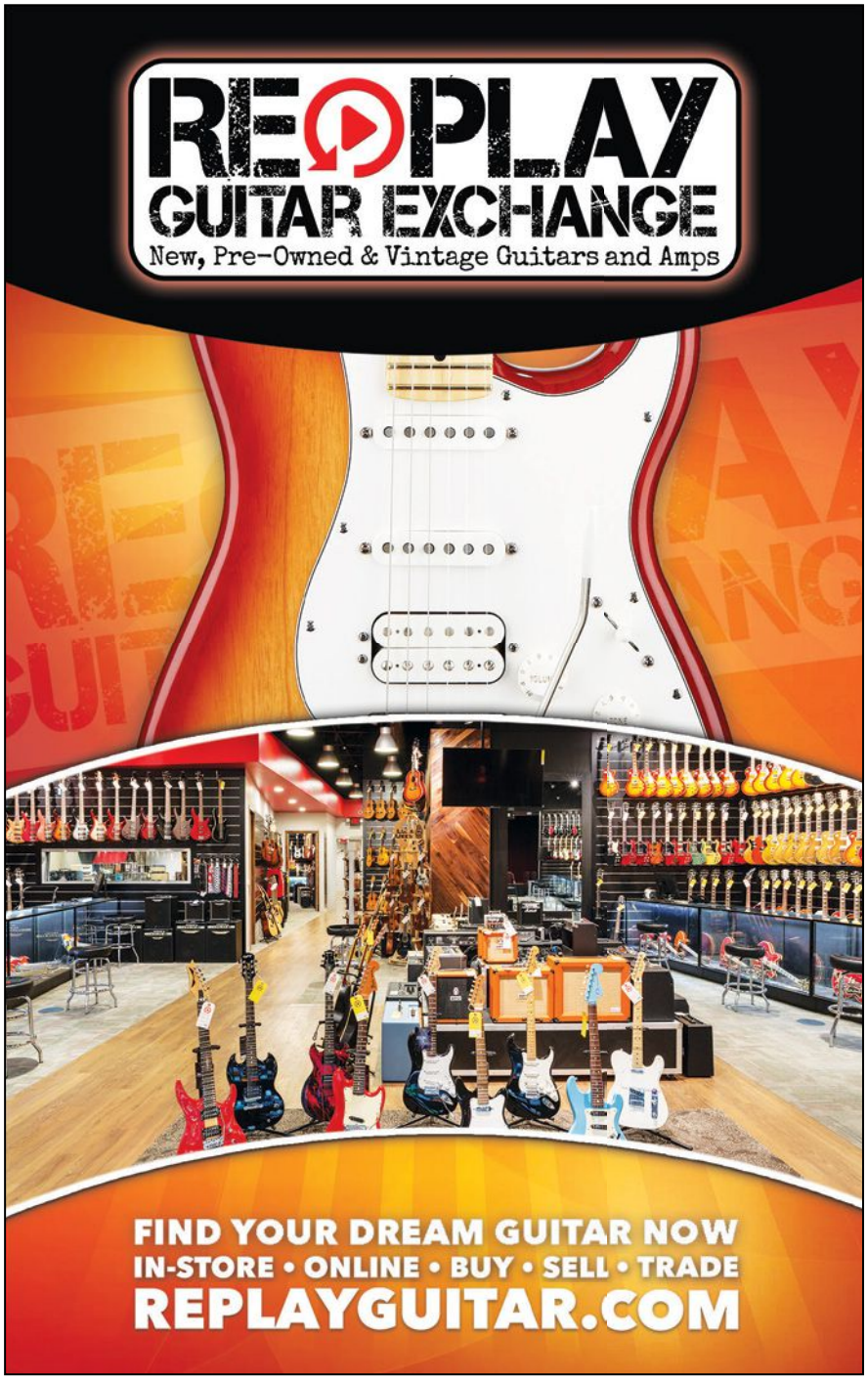
Adds Henson, "We brought in a few electronic and hip-hop producers, guys like Y2K. So there's a lot of really cool shit going on with electronics and how we're using them with real drums and bass and guitar to make something that I would say is very unique. And the shit *bumps*. I keep saying the words 'party banger' when I describe the songs, because I just picture people at parties going off to them."

When it comes to continuing to develop and push the boundaries of their sound, LePage says that he views it as a necessary component of being a musician. "If you like a bunch of different styles of music, why just stick to one?" he asks rhetorically. "That just gets boring. We did the deathcore-type shred guitar music thing, we did the kind of groovy djent thing. We went through those phases. Then we tried the pop thing, and that was cool. It was like, 'This is the sound we want to do because this is really fun music.' And with the whole EDM thing, it's music that's developing so quickly. People are doing new shit every month. And we love that. We always want to be doing something different because that's fun for us." GW

POLYPHIA

Axology

- **GUITAR** (Henson) Ibanez Prototype, Ibanez RG652AHM, Ibanez RG350M, Ibanez S5521Q , Ibanez RGAIX6FM, Ibanez RGDIX6MPB, Ibanez RG852, Ibanez RG920MQM, Fender American Elite Stratocaster, Fender American Rosewood Stratocaster; (LePage) Ibanez Prestige RG655m, Ibanez Prestige S5528LW, Ibanez Prestige S5470F, Ibanez Prestige RG2620Z, Ibanez Prototype, Ibanez SA
- **AMPS** (Henson) Orange Dark Terror head, Orange PPC412 cabinet, Fractal Axe-Fx II; (LePage) Orange Dark Terror Amp head, Orange PPC412 cabinet, Fractal Axe-Fx II



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Gregg Allman

1947-2017

Guitar World bids farewell to a **Southern Rock** legend.

BY ALAN PAUL

WHEN GREGG ALLMAN DIED AT HIS HOME NEAR Savannah, Georgia, on May 27 due to complications from liver cancer, the music world lost one of its greatest and most unswerving performers. Allman was a fixture on theater, arena and festival stages for almost 50 years as a member of the Allman Brothers Band and a solo artist.

Gregg Allman live in concert with the Allman Brothers Band in the mid Seventies in Los Angeles, California

PHOTO BY JEFFREY MAYER/GETTY IMAGES

MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

"He lived to perform," says Warren Haynes, who played in the Allman Brothers Band for almost 25 years. "There was no separation between Gregg and his music."

Allman hadn't performed in over six months. A string of canceled shows going back to November 2016 were a sure sign to fans that Allman was gravely ill. His final show was in Atlanta on October 29, 2016. The date is significant because Duane Allman died on October 29, 1971, and the Allman Brothers Band intentionally finished their final show on that date in 2014, after which Allman continued to perform with his solo band.

"That guy fought to the last to go onstage," says Scott Sharrard, guitarist and musical director of the Gregg Allman Band. "He did not ever want to stop performing until he literally could not sing a note. His second-to-last show was at Red Rocks [*Colorado*] and he was struggling with the elevation to the point that he could not move and we had to carry him to the stage, but he came out and performed slowly but magically."

That Red Rocks acoustic show was on September 25, 2016, and just over a month later he returned for his first band performance in over two months, at his Laid Back Festival in Atlanta. It would be his final show.

"The first four songs were so strong that the band was practically high-fiving," says Sharrard. "Then his pitch and power diminished as the night went on and when we finished I had a feeling that was it. He went to New York intending to play 10 shows at City Winery, but he was unable to stand up and perform."

Gregg and his brother Duane were, of course, the namesake members of the Allman Brothers Band. The group, inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995, formed in Jacksonville, Florida, in 1969 and survived deaths, discord and two breakups to play a triumphant final run of shows at New York's Beacon Theater in October 2014. Gregg was the final member to join the band put together by Duane with a distinct, unerring vision: guitarist Dickey Betts, bassist Berry Oakley and drummers Butch Trucks and Jaimoe. Oakley died in 1972 and the group parted ways with Betts in an acrimonious 2000 split. Trucks committed suicide in January, making 2017 a particularly harrowing year for the Allman Brothers Band and its large fan base. Less than three years after their final show, with rumors of a reunion swirling, the loss of two original members put an exclamation point on the conclusion of one of the greatest bands and stories in the history of rock.

Often hailed as "the greatest white blues singer," Allman was simply one of the best, most distinct, capable and original singers in postwar blues and rock. His voice provided the Allman Brothers Band with the same kind of credibility and durability as his brother and Dickey Betts' guitar playing did. Allman was capable of singing a deep blues like "Stormy Monday" or "One Way Out" in a manner that would make the songs' originators, T-Bone Walker and Sonny Boy Williamson, respectively, proud. But he also had deep roots in folk, rock and R&B and was an excellent songwriter steeped in both Delta blues and the introspective folk rock of Jackson Browne and others; he wrote some of rock's most enduring songs, including "Midnight Rider" and "Melissa."

"There were at least two Greggs," says Haynes. "There was the great blues and R&B singer sitting behind the organ playing incredibly tasty licks that perfectly complemented two lead guitars. And there was a folky Gregg who could pick up an open-tuned acoustic guitar and fingerpick beautifully. And so much of his best songwriting combined both of those elements."

Adds Jaimoe, Allman's partner for 45 years, "Gregory's music and singing were based on rhythm and blues and blues, but his songwriting was so influenced by people like Bob Dylan and Jackson Browne and other people who wrote poem songs. What made him so unique is the way he combined those things."

Gregory Lenoir Allman was born December 8, 1947, in Nashville. His brother Howard Duane was 11 months older. In 1950, their father, Army first lieutenant Willis Turner Allman, was murdered. Their mother, Geraldine, who died in 2015 at age 98, sent the boys to Castle Heights Military Academy when they were eight and nine years old so she could get her CPA license and more ably support the family. After about two years there, which traumatized young Gregg, the boys returned home to Nashville. The next year, they moved to Daytona, Florida. Gregg first

Gregg Allman (left) and Duane Allman in Tallahassee, Florida, October 1970

brought music into the Allman household when he purchased a Sears Silvertone guitar at age 13 with money saved from a paper route and aided by his mother. Before long, Duane was stealing the instrument and trying to steal his little brothers' licks as well.

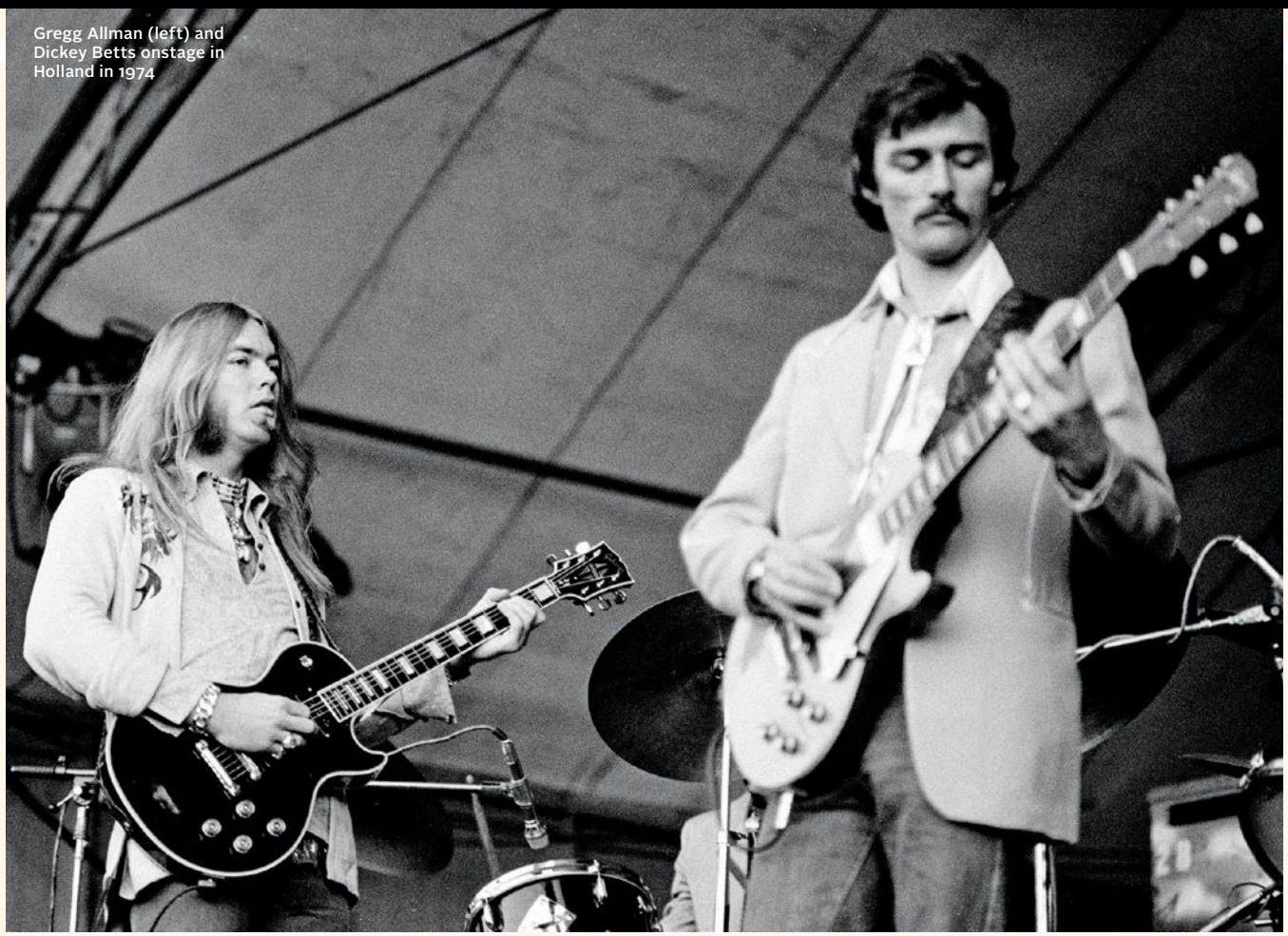
"We fought over it so much that my mother bought him one as well," Allman told *Guitar World* in 1996. "Then there was not only peace in the family but we started playing together. I taught him the basics, but within a few weeks, he could play it really good. It was pretty amazing."

The music bug bit Duane hard enough that he dropped out of school after tenth grade and started playing "day and night." The brothers formed a band and even before Gregg graduated Sea Breeze High—which he insisted on doing—they were playing clubs up and down the Daytona Beach strip under a variety of names, including the Escorts and, finally, the Allman Joys. By the time he graduated in 1965, they were already established as the best, most adventurous band on a burgeoning and competitive circuit and began touring the Southeast.

In 1967, the manager of the Nitty Gritty Dirt Band discovered them in St. Louis and moved the group to Los Angeles, where they were distressed to watch their record label choose a new name (the Hourglass), their material and even their clothes. Duane left after one failed album, making his way to Muscle Shoals, Alabama, where he became a sought-after session player, recording with Wilson Pickett and other soul stars, while Gregg remained in Los Angeles, trying to make a go out of it, still under the name Hourglass, and getting deeper and deeper into songwriting. He was inspired in the latter by L.A.'s burgeoning folk scene, which included his sometime roommate, a teenaged Jackson Browne.

By March 1969, Duane had assembled a new band featuring a second lead guitarist with a knack for great melodies and love of Western swing (Dickey Betts); a bassist who fancied psychedelic rock (Berry Oakley); and two drummers experienced in R&B (J. Johnny "Jaimoe" Johnson) and folk rock (Butch Trucks). Gregg was the final member, adding both soulful singing and great original songs, including "Dreams," "Not My Cross to Bear" and "Whipping Post." Gregg's singing and songwriting were infused with a weary fatalism that belied his age of 21 and were central to the Allman Brothers Band's singular style.

"Everyone is motivated by what every-



Gregg Allman (left) and Dickey Betts onstage in Holland in 1974

one around them is playing and we were no different," says Jaimoe. "And everyone was playing such great stuff that you couldn't help but play better and better. And Gregg's voice and his words were both like instruments in themselves. And his organ playing was damn good—but it was overwhelmed by his incredible voice, so people didn't pay as much attention to it."

While Allman's Hammond B3 organ became a bedrock of the Allman Brothers' sound, underpinning the ferocious guitar playing and hard-charging rhythm section, he had never really played the instrument before the band's formation.

"I'd messed around on the electric piano, and I had a little Vox organ in the Allman Joys because the English guys had 'em, but rhythm guitar was my instrument," Allman said. "But in the Allman Brothers we had too many guitars, [*so*] they blindfolded me, took me in this room, sat me down, took the blindfold off and there sat a brand-new, 1969 B-3 Hammond and a 122-RV Leslie, and they said, 'Okay, we'll see you in a few days! Good luck! Learn how to play this thing.' That's not too much of an exaggeration. The truth is, my brother knew I really, deep down, always wanted a Hammond. But then I stayed up day and night, hour after hour, learning how to really play it."

Often hailed as **"the greatest white blues singer,"** Allman was simply one of the best, most distinct, capable and original singers in postwar blues and rock.

The new band moved to Macon, Georgia, together. Their first two albums, a self-titled debut and its follow-up, *Idlewild South*, are now considered classics, but both failed commercially. The Allman Brothers Band continued to tour relentlessly, establishing itself as a peerless live entity and breaking through with 1971's *At Fillmore East*. The landmark live recording captured the Allmans in all their sonic fury, with just seven songs spread over four vinyl sides. The Allman Brothers Band's distinct style combined the Grateful Dead's love of improvisation with a far more disciplined approach that encompassed rock, blues, country, R&B and jazz and Gregg's terrific songs and vocals.

Just as Duane's vision of commercial success with an uncompromised approach was coming true, he was killed in a motorcycle accident on October 29, 1971. He was 24 and *At Fillmore East* was certified Gold four days earlier. Many presumed the band would peter out without their de facto leader, but they went back to work remarkably quickly, performing their first show exactly three weeks after Duane's funeral. They also returned to the studio to finish *Eat a Peach*, featuring Duane's final recordings, more Fillmore tracks, and three songs recorded after the guitarist's death.

Two of the final tracks were Gregg songs: "Melissa," which he had written in 1967 and Duane always encouraged him to record, and the newly written "Ain't Wasting Time No More," a powerful statement about the need to continue on in the face of adversity. The 1972 album was a hit and the band moved on, first as a five-piece and then bril-

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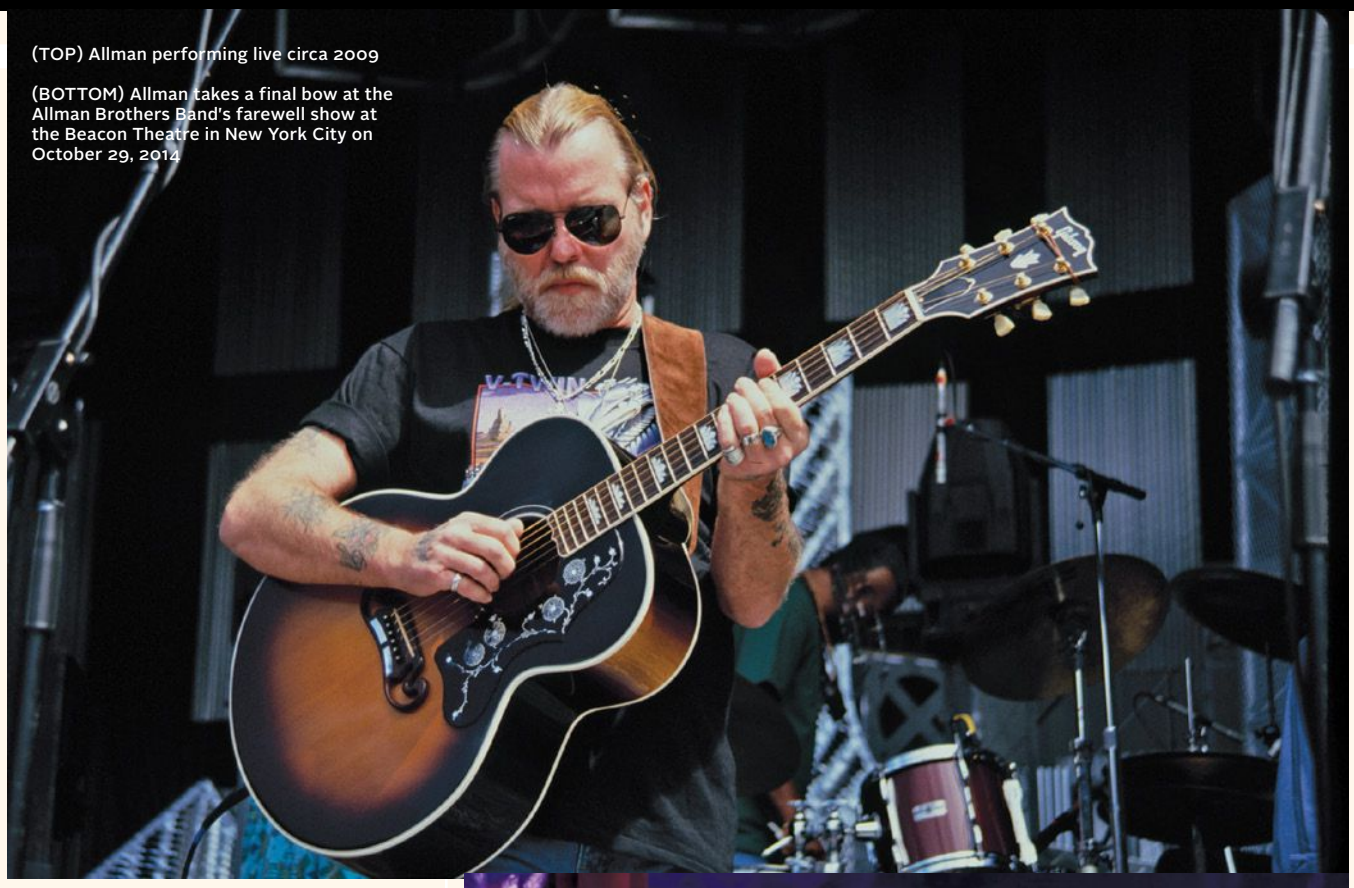

(TOP) Allman performing live circa 2009

(BOTTOM) Allman takes a final bow at the Allman Brothers Band's farewell show at the Beacon Theatre in New York City on October 29, 2014

liantly adding pianist Chuck Leavell to supplement the group without "replacing" Duane.

While in the studio recording *Brothers and Sisters,* Berry Oakley was killed, also in a motorcycle crash. The heartbroken band added Lamar Williams and continued on with nary a pause. *Brothers and Sisters*, released in 1973, became their best seller, fueled by Betts' "Ramblin' Man," an atypical song that became a runaway hit. The next year they were the top-grossing live band in the country. Around this time, they found themselves hailed as the creators of Southern Rock, a genre and title the band scorned even as it spawned hit groups like Lynyrd Skynyrd and the Marshall Tucker Band.

"Southern rock? You might as well call it 'rock rock' because the music was born in the South," Allman scoffed, pointing out that most of the music's originators, including Chuck Berry, Bo Diddley, Elvis Presley and Jerry Lee Lewis were Southerners.

Gregg Allman married Cher in 1975 and their on-again, off-again relationship made them tabloid celebrities. It also brought him to Los Angeles and the physical distance from his bandmates was also metaphorical of a growing divide within the group. A year later, the Allman Brothers Band broke up, cracking under the strain of stardom, threatened lawsuits over alleged financial mismanagement by their label and manager and Allman's plea-bargained testimony in a crew member's drug trial.

The group reunited from 1978–82 and released three albums with diminishing artistic and commercial returns before regrouping again in 1989 for a twentieth anniversary tour. Infused with energy courtesy of guitarist Warren Haynes and bassist Allen Woody (and pianist Johnny Neel, who left after two years), the group toured heavily and recorded three strong studio and two excellent live albums from 1990–95, even as Allman continued to struggle with drug and alcohol addiction.

During some of these years, Allman was an almost ghostly presence in the Allman Brothers Band, slumped over his organ singing. He entered rehab the morning after the band was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in January 1995 and while his sobriety may not have been a straight line, he was a completely different person before and after that day. He became an ever-more forceful presence onstage and in interviews and also re-established his parallel solo career. He referred to the Allman Brothers

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as "the big amp thing" and his own band as "the small amp thing." "To get total musical fulfillment, I need both," he said in 1996.

After a period of turmoil climaxing with the bitter 2000 split with Betts, the Allman Brothers Band maintained the same lineup, featuring guitarists Derek Trucks and Warren Haynes, bassist Oteil Burbridge and percussionist Marc Quinones, along with the three original members Allman, Trucks and Jaimoe, from 2001 until their final shows. They only recorded one studio album with this band, 2003's excellent *Hittin' the Note*, but firmly reestablished themselves as a preeminent live act. They ended on a high note in October 2014 with six nights at New York's Beacon Theatre where they played 239 sold-out shows starting in 1989. The last night was a three-set affair that started on October 28, 2014, and ended early the next morning, the anniversary of Duane's death. Their final song together was the first one they played when Gregg arrived in Jacksonville in March 1969: a reinterpretation of Muddy Waters' "Trouble No More."

> "Gregg's **voice and his words** were both like instruments in themselves."
> —*Jaimoe*

Allman's solo career began with 1973's *Laid Back* album, and he continued to perform with his own band after the Allman Brothers' final show. Allman's last studio album was 2011's *Low Country Blues*. He recorded an album, tentatively titled *Southern Blood*, featuring his road band with producer Don Was in Muscle Shoals, Alabama, in 2016. It is scheduled to be released in the fall.

In April, Haynes and Derek Trucks drove together to Allman's Savannah home for a visit. "We just sat around and talked and told road stories and laughed," says Haynes. "He was weak, but he was happy to see us and to just have a nice time, like countless days and nights on the tour bus.

"There was a piano sitting in his living room and I asked if he had been playing it and he said yes and that it had brought him peace and comfort."

In his final month, Allman also talked to Dickey Betts on the phone a couple of times. It was the old partners' first contact in 17 years.

Last March, Allman was married for the seventh time, to Shannon Williams. He is survived by her, five children and his niece, Duane's daughter Galadrielle Allman.

Allman was buried in Macon, Georgia, in Rose Hill Cemetery next to his brother and Berry Oakley, following a funeral service at Snow's Memorial Chapel, the same place where Duane's service was held. At both events mourners sang "Will the Circle Be Unbroken." GW

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ALLMAN JOYS

BY ANDY ALEDORT, ALAN PAUL AND JIMMY BROWN

GUITAR WORLD CELEBRATES THE TIMELESS MUSIC OF THE ALLMAN BROTHERS BAND WITH THIS COMPREHENSIVE OVERVIEW OF THEIR **25 ALL-TIME GREATEST SONGS**.

The Allman Brothers Band in Macon, Georgia, 1970; (from left) Jaimoe, Duane Allman, Gregg Allman, Berry Oakley, Dickey Betts and Butch Trucks

PHOTO BY JIM MARSHALL VIA GETTY IMAGES

1

"WHIPPING POST"

***The Allman Brothers Band* (1969) and *At Fillmore East* (1971)**

Of the many timeless classic rock songs residing in the Allman Brothers Band canon, "Whipping Post" stands as the heavyweight champion of them all. Released originally on the band's eponymous debut, the song's full power was realized in live performance, captured in all its brilliance on the band's watershed double live album, *At Fillmore East*. At 22 minutes in length, this version comprises the entire fourth and closing side of the album. It is widely revered as one of the greatest rock songs of all time. This live version showcases everything original—and everything truly extraordinary—about the Allman Brothers Band: distinctly original music, soulful, expressive vocals and lyrics from Gregg Allman, fiery, virtuoso guitar playing from Duane Allman and Dickey Betts, and jazz-like musical intricacy and precise band interplay.

"Whipping Post," written by Gregg Allman, started out as a basic slow blues in A minor. While initially working on it in rehearsal, bassist Berry Oakley said, "Hold it! I have an idea for this tune—let's work on it tomorrow." And the next day he came in with a completely rearranged, re-imagined structure and feel that became the "Whipping Post" we all know. He had reworked the intro into an odd 11/8 meter that somehow sounds perfectly suited for the song. From there, Duane and Dickey began to forge their unique harmonized guitar lines.

"When Duane and I would work on harmonizing guitar parts, we didn't use any kind of technical approach," said Betts. "We didn't study the structure of the scales or spend time figuring out on paper what *should* work. We approached harmonizing guitar parts in the same way we approached vocal harmonies: we would try a few different ideas, and go with the one that sounded the best to our ears. Usually, I'd have a certain sound in my mind that I was after, and we used a 'trial and error' method to find it."

2

"BLUE SKY"

***Eat a Peach* (1972)**

"Blue Sky" is a gentle ballad-like song with a country feel, revealing the country influences present in the songwriting style of Dickey Betts. He wrote the song as a tribute to his wife, Sandy "Bluesky" Wabegijig, who was of Native American descent. *Eat a Peach* was the first album released after the passing of Duane Allman, and "Blue Sky" represents one of his final recordings with the band. Played rarely in concert at the time, a great version featuring Duane is available on *S.U.N.Y. at Stonybrook: Stonybrook, NY 9/19/71,* self-released by the band in 2003.

"Blue Sky," Dickey Betts' debut as a lead

Duane Allman recording at Muscle Shoals Studios on September 23, 1969, in Sheffield, Alabama

singer on an Allman Brothers album, features beautifully inspired harmonized guitar lines from Dickey and Duane. "When we originally recorded 'Blue Sky,' Duane and I tried all different kinds of harmonies until we found the one that best suited the song," said Betts. "We found that the softer-edged harmony was what worked best. In many instances, the relationship between the melody and the harmony changes to a combination of thirds and fourths, and this is exactly the case with 'Blue Sky.' The initial guitar melody in the song is based on a scale known as E major hexatonic, which is the same as a standard major scale, but the seventh tone is removed, resulting in a six-tone major scale. The very first melodic line in the song, however, was not harmonized by another guitar."

3

"MIDNIGHT RIDER"

***Idlewild South* (1970)**

Gregg Allman's theme song came to him almost whole in a flash of inspiration. " 'Midnight Rider' hit me like a damn sack of hoe handles," he said. "It was just there, crawling all over me. And about an hour and 15 minutes later I had the rough draft down...and was putting it down on tape."

The only problem was that Allman's inspiration came in the middle of the night and drummer Jaimoe was the only band member he could find to record a demo—and besides, he was locked out of the Capricorn Records studio. When studio managers said to leave them alone after being woken up at 3 A.M., Allman and roadie Kim Payne broke in. Along the way, Payne contributed a crucial line that completed the song: "I've gone past the point of caring/some ol' bed I'll soon be sharing." With his other bandmates nowhere to be found, Allman put a bass in the hands of the awoken road manager Twiggs Lyndon, showing him how to play the distinctive lick running through his brain and telling him to play absolutely nothing else.

After wildly flipping switches trying to turn on the studio boards, Payne managed to get tape rolling and Gregg recorded a demo of "Midnight Rider" with himself on

12-string guitar, Lyndon playing rudimentary bass and Jaimoe on drums, or maybe percussion—no one's recollection is quite clear on that. They all say, however, that the final version differed little structurally from the quickly recorded demo, other than Duane Allman and Dickey Betts' subtly sweet guitar work, which put the song over the top, creating a haunting, simple, perfectly crafted classic that will be played long after we are all dust in the wind.

PHOTO BY MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

4

"DREAMS"

The Allman Brothers Band

Gregg Allman said that he arrived in Jacksonville to join his brother's new band with a catalog of 22 songs. His confidence in his songwriting flagged as the first dozen songs were rejected, before he got to "Dreams," which he always maintained was the only song he ever wrote on a Hammond organ. (He generally preferred guitar or piano.)

The song's minimalist lyrics read like a blues haiku, anchored by the existentialist dread of being haunted by redemptive dreams so distant you can't even dream them. The song, which was immediately worked up by the band, became a perfect skeleton to hang their interpretation of Miles Davis and John Coltrane's modal jazz explorations. With a bass line directly pinched from Davis' "All Blues" and Jaimoe playing drum fills from the same song, Duane Allman played a deeply moving two-part solo over a simply swinging two-chord vamp. It is the only classic Allman Brothers song to feature one instead of two guitar soloists, with Duane playing a "straight" solo, then picking up his slide to kick the song into overdrive. Like so much of the debut album, "Dreams" remained a live staple until the last show. It is arguably the band's spiritual core.

5

"NOT MY CROSS TO BEAR"

The Allman Brothers Band

Along with "Dreams," "Not My Cross to Bear" is the second of two songs that Gregg had in his back pocket when he traveled from Los Angeles to join the new band in Jacksonville. And, again, it's remarkable that he wrote such a deep, world weary blues at such a young age, promising a departing lover, "I'll live on, I'll be strong," a promise that seems primarily determined to convince himself.

In a demo recorded in Los Angeles in January 1969, the song is structurally complete and Gregg's vocals are already deep and true, but it also provides keen insight into what the band added: a sure groove and steady time through the deepest, slowest blues and two contrasting but equally powerful guitar voices, with Duane and Dickey playing solos that bleed, cry and gnash just as surely as Gregg's simply phrased, powerfully emotive vocals. No song better encapsulates the way in which the Allman Brothers Band delivered on the elusive goal of countless hippie rockers who loved Muddy Waters: playing blues that were equally original and rooted in the classics.

6

"MELISSA"

Eat a Peach

Gregg Allman said that he wrote and threw out 300–400 songs before he wrote his first keeper: "Melissa," in late 1967, shortly after Duane traded a beloved guitar to get Gregg a quality acoustic. Allman said that he picked up the guitar not knowing that his brother had tuned it to open E.

"I just started strumming it and hit these beautiful chords," he said. "It was just open strings, then an E shape first fret, then moved to the second fret. This is a great example of the way different tunings can open up different roads to you as a songwriter. The music immediately made me feel good and the words just started coming to me."

The brothers Allman cut the song first in 1968 with Butch Trucks' 31st of February, a demo that was eventually released under the misleading name "Duane and Gregg Allman." After Duane's death, as the band finished a few tracks for *Eat a Peach,* Gregg took out his old favorite.

"We needed some more songs and I knew my brother loved 'Melissa,' " Allman explained. "I had never really shown it to the band. I thought it was too soft for the Allman Brothers and was saving it for a solo record I figured I'd eventually do."

Everyone agreed that the song was excellent but lacked an instrumental section to put it over the top. Dickey Betts took a tape home and worked out the compelling fills and solos that finalized the tune. "The next day was Gregg's birthday," Betts recalled. "I walked in and said 'Happy birthday, brother' and laid my guitar part on them."

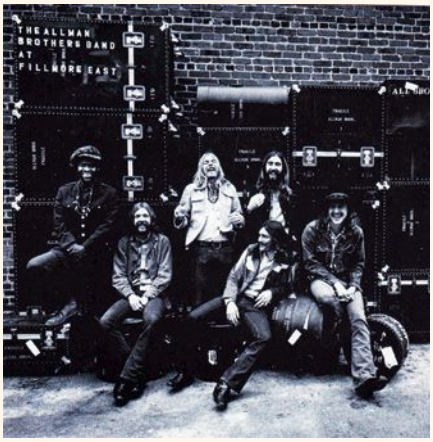
7

"IN MEMORY OF ELIZABETH REED"

Idlewild South* and *At Fillmore East

This is the first of many distinctly original instrumental songs Dickey Betts would write for the Allman Brothers Band and, like "Whipping Post," its true power, breadth and scope came to fruition in the live setting. It remains one of the most recognizable songs in the band's catalog, and was a staple in the live shows from the song's inception until the band's final shows in 2014. Said Betts, "[*Late Allmans bassist*] Berry Oakley and I inspired each other's improvisational creativity while we were in Second Coming, the band that presaged the Allman Brothers. One of our favorite things to do was to jam in minor keys, experimenting freely with the sounds of different minor modes. We allowed our ears to guide us, and this type of 'jamming' served to inspire the writing of songs like 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed' and 'Les Brers in A Minor.' We were both fascinated with the modal jazz improvisation of Miles Davis and John Coltrane, such as that heard on *Kind of Blue*."

" 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed' was inspired by a woman I knew named Carmella. At the time, she was involved with a friend of mine, but something started to happen between her and myself. She was a very seductive, sultry, secretive woman, and I thought our little cloak-and-dagger romance was a beautiful image for a song. She and I would rendezvous in this old abandoned graveyard by the river, which was the place I liked to



Dickey Betts with "Goldie," his 1957 Les Paul

go to write songs. I wrote just about everything there at that time; I wrote 'Blue Sky' there, too. When I wrote this song for her, the gravestone next to where I was sitting happened to say, 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed,' so that became the song's title."

An essential signature element in this song is the brilliant use of harmonized guitar lines, present in both the initial "intro" section of the tune as well as the main theme and the harmonized melodic lines that wrap up each guitar solo section. "I first discovered harmonized melodies from listening to western swing music, like Bob Wills, where the melodies are harmonized by guitar, pedal steel, piano and violin," said Betts. "Devising harmonized guitar parts became something Duane and I really enjoyed working on together. We would let our imaginations guide us as to what the harmony line should sound like. Of course, the presence of these guitar harmonies became essential to the sound of the Allman Brothers Band."

8

"JESSICA"

***Brothers and Sisters* (1973)**

Brothers and Sisters was the first album to feature neither Duane Allman nor Berry Oakley, both of whom had died tragically in motorcycle accidents over the previous two years. Quite incredibly, the band pulled together to create the most successful album of its entire career, on the strength of such powerful Betts compositions as "Jessica," "Southbound" and the band's only Number One hit, "Ramblin' Man." *Brothers and Sisters* sold over a million copies within a month of its release, and to date over seven million copies worldwide.

"Here's the story which has been told many times," recalled Betts. "I had a general idea of a melody and a feeling for 'Jessica,' but I couldn't get started on it; nothing was really adding up. My little girl Jessica, who at the time was an infant, crawled up to me and I started playing to her, playing to the feeling of the innocence of her personality. And soon the whole song just fell together. The song was justly named after her for providing the needed inspiration."

"Jessica" also displays the influence of some other elements that were important to Betts' musical development, such as the playing of legendary jazz guitarist Django Reinhardt. "Django only used two fingers to fret with," said Betts, "so I devised a melody that I could play with just the index and middle fingers." Additionally, Betts' ancestry includes the fiddle players of Prince Edward Sound, which is located in eastern Canada just above Nova Scotia. "These fiddle players were known for possessing a very distinct style," explained Betts, "and the style of the Prince Edward Sound fiddlers sounded just like the fiddle playing of my dad and my uncles. This provided me with an instinct for a melodic approach to playing. One of the best examples of this influence coming to the fore is 'Jessica.' "

9

"REVIVAL"

Idlewild South

"Revival," A.K.A. "Revival (Love Is Everywhere)," represents Dickey Betts' first songwriting credit with the band. " 'Revival' started out as an instrumental tune," said Betts. "In fact, we would refer to that first instrumental section of the song as 'The Gypsy Dance.' When I wrote it, I had the image of gypsies dancing around a fire in my mind, and I tried to conjure that spirit in the music."

The song opens with Duane Allman's strummed acoustic-guitar rhythm part, followed immediately by an evocative, bluesy harmonized guitar line. Once again, the influence of modal jazz is present, as the song moves seamlessly through different tonalities, such as major, natural minor and the Dorian mode. Drummer "Jaimoe" Jai Johanny Johanson is featured on percussion on the track, lending a Latin feel. This Latin feel, also present on "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed,"

(PHOTO BY LARRY HULST/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

was inspired in part by Latin jazz as well as the Latin flavors South Florida musicians like Mike Pinera (Blues Image) were incorporating into their music at the time.

"In writing this tune—or any of the instrumentals—you have to decide what you are trying to do, and then see if you can make it happen," said Betts. "These are the mental tools I use to help guide me through, to find the proper direction for whatever piece of music I am working on. I used this approach for songs like 'In Memory of Elizabeth Reed,' 'High Falls' and 'Revival.' Just like the use of words in the telling of a story, every note is of essential importance in crafting a successful instrumental." After this initial minor-key instrumental section, the song moves back into a major key for the uplifting gospel-like vocal sections.

10

"RAMBLIN' MAN"

Brothers and Sisters

Written by Dickey Betts in 1972, "Ramblin' Man" was the Allman Brothers Band's only top-10 hit single and the last song recorded by bassist Berry Oakley, shortly before his untimely passing in November of that year. Inspired by a 1951 Hank Williams composition of the same name, the song features Betts singing lead vocal. "Ramblin' Man" saw the Allmans reach a commercial peak and, together with other Betts-penned songs included on the album, represented a stylistic change in direction for the group, from their foundational blues-based and jazz-tinged rock to more of a country-pop flavor, while still upholding their credo of collective improvisation and the jamming spirit that the ABB has always embraced.

"Ramblin' Man" was written and performed in the key of G, but the original recording was sped up in the mastering process, which, in addition to increasing the tempo by a few beats per minute, raised its pitch a little more than a half step, resulting in the finished track sounding slightly sharp of the key of A♭. Along with other Betts compositions featured on *Brothers and Sisters*, namely "Southbound," "Pony Boy" and the instrumental "Jessica," "Ramblin' Man," represented Dickey's emergence as one of the outfit's principal songwriters, alongside Gregg, and demonstrated that the guitarist could admirably carry the torch as the band's only full-time guitarist, as they chose, for the time being, not to replace Duane with another six-stringer, instead bringing in the very talented pianist Chuck Leavell as a second instrumental soloist.

"Ramblin' Man" gloriously showcases Betts' signature lyrical soloing style, which is characterized by flowing eighth-note rhythms, rolling melodic contours, soaring, pedal steel–like bends, smooth legato phrasing and the frequent use of the major hexatonic scale, a sound that is regarded by many as his musical calling card. Guitarist Les Dudek made a guest appearance on the track, providing the arrangement's signature sweet harmony leads, which he layered by overdubbing single-note parts.

11

"AIN'T WASTING TIME NO MORE"

Eat a Peach

As the lead single from *Eat a Peach*, the first Allman Brothers Band album released following the tragic death of founding band member and leader Duane Allman, Gregg Allman's heartfelt composition captures, in part, his feelings at one of the most difficult times of his life. The lyrical content of the song deals with overcoming depression, with lines like, "Last Sunday morning the sunshine felt like rain, the week before, they all seemed the same... But with the help of God and two friends, I've come to realize, I still have two strong legs and even wings to fly," and also, "You don't need no gypsy to tell you why, you can't let another precious day go by."

The song is driven by Gregg's rock-solid piano playing, supplemented by lyrical slide guitar playing by Dickey Betts, ably picking up the Duane Allman mantle, as well as gently flowing percussion from Jaimoe.

12

"LES BRERS IN A MINOR"

Eat a Peach

Like Betts' earlier masterpiece, "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," this majestic nine-minute instrumental, penned by the guitarist in 1971 and recorded by the ABB in the wake of brother Duane's tragic death late that year, showcases Dickey's eclectic musical sophistication as a composer and grasp of both jazz harmony and classical orchestration. The piece begins with an extended, mesmerizing intro, featuring a highly interactive ensemble crescendo that swells from a whisper through a series of meditative tonal-center shifts, from A to G and back, performed in a "floaty" free-time feel and culminating in a climactic succession of loud, dramatic "orchestra hits," in a way that brings to mind the opening strains from the first and second movements of Beethoven's ninth symphony.

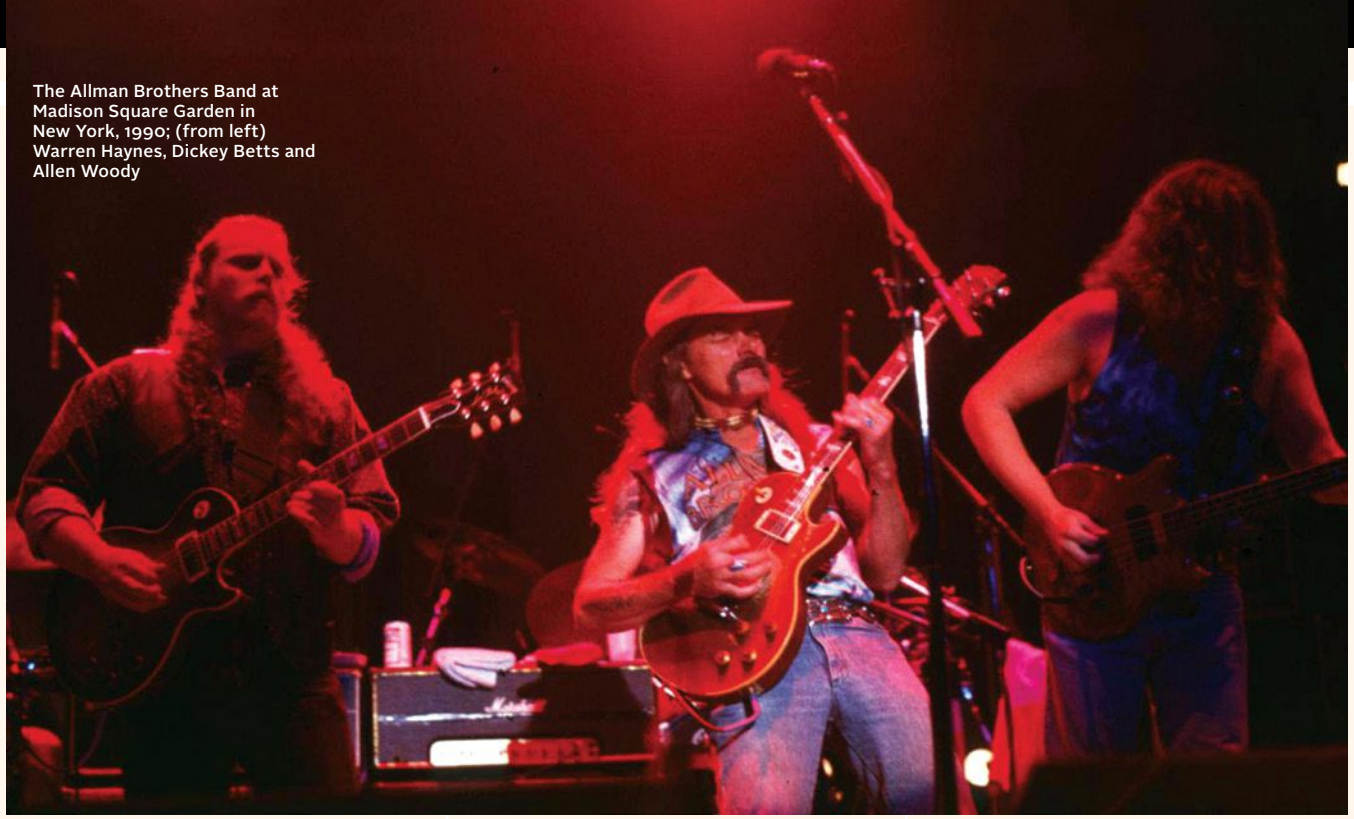
Near the four-minute mark, Berry Oakley nimbly kicks off the tune's main theme and establishes its brisk tempo with a growling, flat-picked bass riff, a repeating ostinato figure that outlines an A minor hexatonic tonality, over which Dickey and Gregg then proceed to double the tune's melody in unison over a rich, syncopated percussion groove. This is followed at 4:25 by an inventive, jazzy bridge, or interlude, that momentarily interrupts the driving 16th-note groove for about 20 seconds with a somber melody, set to an intriguing chord progression played with a half-time feel, followed by a return to the 16th-note groove and some inspired open-ended soloing and jamming, with each individual solo bookended and punctuated by tight ensemble riffs.

13

"DON'T KEEP ME WONDERIN'"

Idlewild South

Rhythm and blues and soul were the two styles of music that had the strongest influence on Gregg Allman as both a performer and as a composer. He had stated often that such artists as Ray Charles, Bobby "Blue" Bland and Little Milton were hugely influential on his singing style and musical sense. According to Gregg, "When I heard Ray Charles, I said, 'That's my goal in life.' Ray Charles is the one who taught me to just relax and let it ooze out. If it's in your soul, it'll come out."



The Allman Brothers Band at Madison Square Garden in New York, 1990; (from left) Warren Haynes, Dickey Betts and Allen Woody

"Don't Keep Me Wonderin' " kicks off with a dual slide guitar/harmonica lick, followed by a funky blues-like rhythm part laid down by Dickey Betts, abutted by slide guitar from Duane and harmonica from Thom Doucette. Duane plays a stinging, high slide solo that culminates with a syncopated band figure similar to those heard on "Black Hearted Woman."

14

"STATESBORO BLUES"

At Fillmore East

For a great many of us—especially those who were teenagers in 1971 when *At Fillmore* East was released—"Statesboro Blues" represents the very moment the Allman Brothers Band blasted into our lives. As an aspiring young guitar player, its impact was instantaneous. Duane Allman's dramatic and distinct slide guitar intro grabs you from the very first note and, as the opening track on what would be the band's breakthrough album, the hard-rocking, lock-tight sound and spirit of the Allman Brothers was now firmly set in stone. Even Michael Aherns' understated introduction, "Okay, the Allman Brothers Band," is now considered an essential part of the track.

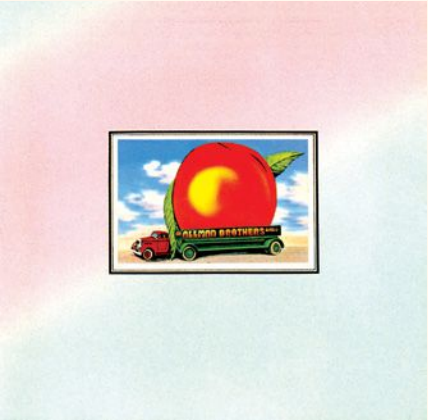
"Statesboro Blues" was written by Piedmont blues guitarist/singer Blind Willie McTell, who first recorded the song in 1928, backing himself on acoustic guitar. Blues singer/guitarist Taj Mahal recorded a great version of the song on his 1968 eponymous debut, featuring guitarist Jesse Ed Davis, and this version is the one Duane heard, inspiring him to learn to play slide guitar. The story goes that brother Gregg had given Duane the album for his birthday, simultaneous giving him a bottle of Coricidan, a cold medication, as Duane was sick at the time. Inspired by the recording, Duane emptied the pills from the bottle and, wearing it on the ring finger of his fretting hand, taught himself to play slide guitar. Today, millions of guitarists the world over use bottle-type slides on their ring fingers—such as Warren Haynes and Derek Trucks—in emulation of Duane Allman.

15

"MOUNTAIN JAM"

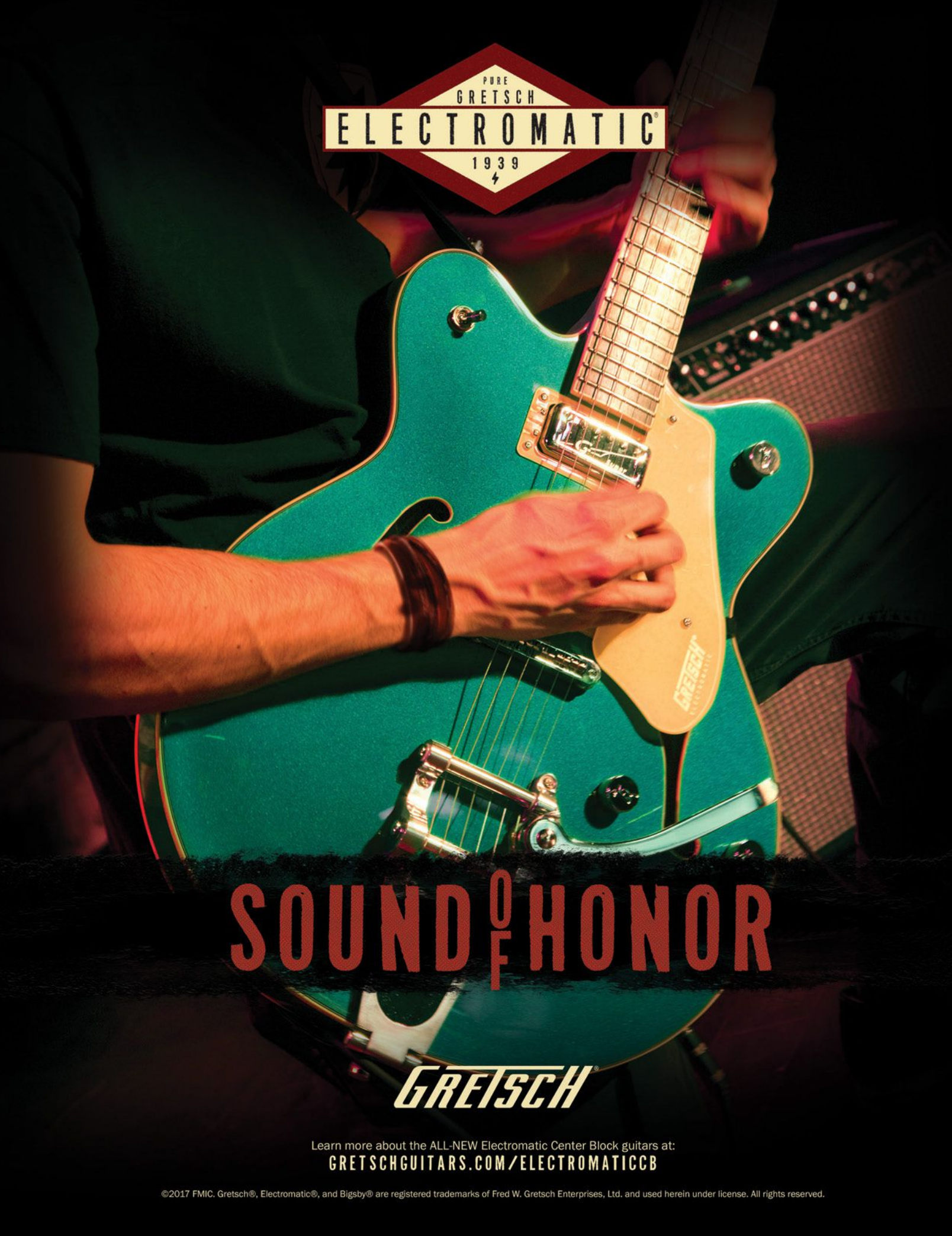
Eat a Peach

Based on the 1967 Donovan song "There Is a Mountain," "Mountain Jam" served as an extended instrumental jamming vehicle for the Allman Brothers Band throughout the band's long history. The first recording of the song is from one of their very first gigs, May 4, 1969; they also played the song on the very last night the Allman Brothers Band ever performed, October 29, 2014. This is wholly appropriate, as no song better represents the adventurous, experimental spirit of the band's musical DNA.



Listeners get the first hints of "Mountain Jam" and the end of the album that precedes *Eat a Peach*, *At Fillmore East*, following the last strains of "Whipping Post" as the album fades out. At nearly 34 minutes in length, "Mountain Jam" is a wild ride, through beautifully delicate harmonized guitar lines, intensely extraordinary guitar solos from Duane and Dickey, expressive Hammond organ work from Gregg, and lock-tight, swinging rhythm section work from Berry Oakley, Butch Trucks and Jaimoe. Dickey and Duane burst into improvised harmonized lines, all the while displaying incredible chops and dreamlike Les Paul/Marshall stack guitar tones. A furious tandem drum solo is followed by a deeply syncopated bass solo from Berry and a shift to a shuffle feel and reference to Jimi Hendrix' "Third Stone from the Sun," transitioning seamlessly to a 6/8 instrumental take on "Will the Circle Be Unbroken."

PHOTO BY STEVE EICHNER/WIREIMAGE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16

"NOBODY KNOWS"

***Shades of Two Worlds* (1991)**

The Allman Brothers are revered for instrumental masterpieces like "Jessica," "In Memory of Elizabeth Reed," "Hot 'Lanta," 'Don't Want You No More," "Mountain Jam," "Little Martha" and "Les Brers in A Minor," but they have on occasion directed that instrumental magic touch to vocal tunes such as "Whipping Post," as well as this *tour de force* from the band's early Nineties incarnation. Gregg Allman had derided the tune for being too similar to "Whipping Post"—both songs are in A minor with a 6/8 feel (as is "Hot 'Lanta")—but make no mistake; "Nobody Knows" is as powerful a track as any in the band's history.

" 'Nobody Knows' is one of the best lyrical songs I've ever written," Betts said in '91. "These are nice, abstract, poetic lyrics. I wrote that about as fast as I could write the words down, at 4:30 in the morning after rehearsal. [*Producer*] Tom Dowd had said, 'We could use a tune as heavy as 'Whipping Post" for this record,' and I thought, Man, that's a tall order! I sat down and those words just started flying out. In 30 minutes I'd written the whole thing, like I was writing a letter to someone."

17

"LITTLE MARTHA"

Eat a Peach

Duane Allman's sole songwriting credit closes *Eat a Peach* on a wistful note, as it did every Allman Brothers concert of the last 20 years, piped through the P.A. Said to come to Duane in a dream and pieced together over the years, the lilting dobro duet with Betts is played in open E♭. Like so much about Duane, it leaves you wondering "what if." "My brother loved playing that kind of stuff, and I have to think there would have been more music coming out of him," said Gregg.

18

"ONE WAY OUT"

Eat a Peach

"One Way Out" is a blues song originally recorded (or so it seems) by Elmore James in 1960/'61. Before the Elmore version was released, however, Sonny Boy Williamson II recorded it for Chess Records, releasing it in September 1961. He then re-recorded the song with blues guitarist Buddy Guy in 1963, and this latter version features the arrangement covered by the Allman Brothers, replete with the well-known signature guitar line. Elmore's version was released posthumously in 1965, bearing a closer resemblance to the earlier Sonny Boy track.

The version released on *Eat a Peach* was recorded during the band's final performance at Fillmore East on the night of the venue's closing, June 27, 1971. It is included on the deluxe, expanded editions of *At Fillmore East*. The track fades in on Betts' statement of the primary guitar lick, with the entire band dropping in 16 bars later as Duane emulates Sonny Boy's harmonica lick with slide guitar. Dickey takes the first solo and it is simply stunning, with laser beam-like intensity and, probably, the greatest Les Paul/Marshall guitar tone ever heard.

Following a brief drum solo, Dickey and Duane trade four-bar licks, and during Duane's last phrase, bassist Berry Oakley enters a beat early, briefly throwing the band off kilter. They quickly readjust, and this wrinkle is considered an essential part of the song's charm. The Allmans' version of "One Way Out" has been featured in many films, none more effectively than Martin Scorsese's *The Departed*, used as the backtrack to a brutal bar fight.

19

"COME AND GO BLUES"

Brothers and Sisters

This underrated masterpiece, originally conceived by Gregg on a fingerpicked acoustic guitar in open G tuning, is built around a hauntingly beautiful, descending blues turnaround that repeats over a G bass pedal tone for the song's verses. (Check out his stirring live solo performance video of the song from 1981 on YouTube.) The full ABB reading of "Come and Go Blues" featured on *Brothers and Sisters*, with bassist Lamar Williams admirably stepping into the late Berry Oakley's large musical shoes, develops the composition into a rather ambitious arrangement, with inventive instrumental interludes and ensemble breaks throughout and tasteful improvised solos by Leavell and Betts.

20

"BLACK HEARTED WOMAN"

The Allman Brothers Band

Like "Whipping Post," this early Gregg Allman–penned gem from the band's debut album features one of their earliest uses of odd meter, opening with a bluesy, repeating one-bar ensemble riff in A that drops an eighth note from the last beat, resulting in a meter of 7/8, before giving way to a more "stable" groove, in this case 4/4. The song's funky, hard-driving verse sections are based on a clever twist on the standard 12-bar blues form that extends it two bars, with the two-dominant chord (B7) interjected after the five (E7♯9) and the progression capped off by an octave-doubled ensemble break riff that brings to mind the soulful themes of Jimi Hendrix's Band of Gypsies repertoire.

Duane and Dickey both serve up inspired, fiery licks throughout the arrangement, their guitars panned hard left and right in the stereo mix, with punchy lead tones and aggressive string bends and finger vibratos. Gregg kills it vocally, Berry Oakley's bass line cooks and Butch Trucks' and Jaimoe's percussion interlude/breakdown, featuring drums and congas, ushers in a dramatic minor pentatonic "tribal" riff that Oakley scat sings along to, adding intensity and soul to an already earthy melody.

21

"SEVEN TURNS"

***Seven Turns* (1990)**

The Allman Brothers Band had a lot to prove when they regrouped for the second time in 1990—namely if they could really make a run at the glories of the original golden era with

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new members Warren Haynes and Allen Woody. The title track of their comeback album answered a lot of questions. A classic Betts, country-tinged rocker, it tipped its hat to Native American philosophy, offered "Blue Sky"–like uplift and featured Haynes' slide and Betts' leads side by side. The signature call-and-response vocal that closes the song came about naturally. Gregg Allman was shooting pool as Haynes and Betts worked out vocal harmonies and unconsciously answered their lines. Haynes had the good sense to recognize the missing piece to the puzzle.

22

"YOU DON'T LOVE ME"

At Fillmore East

"Everything Duane and I play on the extended ending of that track was completely improvised," said Dickey Betts. "I played a piece of an old gospel song, some train sounds and things like that, and Duane picked up on those things and went off into his own improvisations."

The success of the Allman Brothers Band exploded with the release of the incendiary masterpiece *At Fillmore East*, recorded over two nights in New York City, March 12 and 13, 1971. What is largely forgotten is that the band was originally the "special guest" opening act for Johnny Winter, but in short order the Allmans were switched to headliners.

"You Don't Love Me" is an old blues tune originally written and recorded by Willie Cobb in 1960. In 1965, Junior Wells and Buddy Guy released a cover version on Junior Wells' debut release, *Hoodoo Man Blues*, upon which the Allmans based their version. The band uses this track as a vehicle for a near 20-minute jam, comprising the entire second side of disc one. Duane and Dickey trade intensely burning solos through the first segment of the performance, joined by Thom Doucette's harmonica. At the seven-minute point, the band stops and Duane ventures into a two-minute unaccompanied improvisation that is simply stunning, followed by an equally inspired solo turn by Betts.

"What you hear was played in the spur-of-the-moment, which is exactly what the blues is all about," said Betts. "You have to be fast on your feet, and react instantly to all of the sounds around you, allowing the music to happen in as spontaneous a way as possible."

23

"NO ONE LEFT TO RUN WITH"

***An Evening with the Allman Brothers Band: 2nd Set* (1995)**

One of the highlights from the two excellent live albums the released by the ABB in the Nineties. Betts' ode to the good old days and lost running buddies quickly became a tribute to Duane, Berry, Lamar and every other fallen brother—sadly added to over the next 20 years. This live number features a signature Allen Woody bass line, great Haynes and Betts guitar parts, a growling Allman vocal and a spotlight on the three-man rhythm section, with Trucks and Jaimoe augmented by Marc Quinones. In other words, the whole Allmans enchilada. No wonder the song remained in heavy rotation until the final show.

24

"HOT 'LANTA"

At Fillmore East

Made famous as an impeccably recorded live performance at one of the legendary 1971 Fillmore East shows, this cookin', jazzy instrumental, an ABB compositional collaboration, features a brisk swing groove in 3/4 meter—a "jazz waltz"—that recalls the feel of "Whipping Post" but is slightly faster and edgier, with Oakley laying down an aggressive and tastefully crafted walking bass line, lots of Duane's and Dickey's signature harmonized lead guitar melodies and some of Gregg's most inspired and ambitious B3 playing ever.

The tune is based on a repeating blues progression in A minor that's extended from the standard 12 bars to 13 (if counted in 12/8 meter instead of 3/4), via a dramatic and decidedly jazzy twist—a chromatically descending dominant seven sharp-nine chord, starting on the five, E7♯9, and traveling down to C♯7♯9—before restating the intro organ riff as a one-bar turnaround. Gregg, Dickey and Duane all take fiery, well-conceived improvised solos, two choruses each, that lead up to an exhilarating duet drum break. Not content, however, to just leave it at that and come back in with a restatement of the "head" (melody), the Brothers inject a clever ensemble interlude riff into the arrangement, built around the drum break, giving both the composition and their performance of it added richness and depth.

25

"STORMY MONDAY"

At Fillmore East

The Allman Brothers Band were essential in bringing classic blues music to a worldwide audience in the late Sixties/early Seventies, and their masterful rendition of the T-Bone Walker classic "(Call It) Stormy Monday," from *At Fillmore East*, introduced the song to a new generation of listeners. Duane and Gregg had been playing the song for years as it was a staple in their set with the Allman Joys, basing their version on Bobby "Blue" Bland's cover. Here, Duane and Dickey display their complete mastery of the blues idiom.

"My biggest blues guitar influences would be T-Bone, B.B. King and Albert King," said Betts. "A big part of Albert's signature style was his use of extremely wide bends. He would bend notes all over the place while staying on one string at one fret; he could get four or five different notes out of one single position! Albert sounds sort of like a trumpet player on licks like these. On the *Fillmore* versions of both 'Stormy Monday' and 'Whipping Post,' you can hear examples of Albert's influence on my playing in terms of using wide bends such as these." GW

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PEACE OFFERING

BY ALAN DI PERNA

CARLOS SANTANA teams with the ISLEY BROTHERS to celebrate the Power of Peace.

Carlos Santana and the Isley Brothers...come again? Both are musical legends with long careers marked by relentless innovation. And neither act is exactly a stranger to the power of the almighty groove. They've just released an album together, *Power of Peace*. But at first blush, the pairing might seem a little strange. Is there really a common ground there?

Those in attendance at the Las Vegas House of Blues on a recent summer evening were left in no doubt that the combination is indeed an inspired one. Nestled inside of the Mandalay Bay hotel and casino, the Vegas House of Blues has practically become Carlos Santana's living room. Over the course of many long residencies there, he and his ace band have dialed themselves into the intimate venue's acoustics as if the place was built just for them.

"Carlos has that rare ability to play a melody for the last guy in the last seat in the corner," says Paul Reed Smith, who has been building guitars for Santana for several decades. "It's that kind of guitar playing where it's like somebody singing. And it grabs every last person in the room, even if they're out back buying beers. He's really good at that. When he plays, people dance, people sing and people do what music is meant to do."

Santana himself puts it more philosophically. "The great guitarists, they don't sound like a guitar," he says. "They sound like life. They don't sound like strings, chords and melodies. They're like a big slice of life."

But the energy in the room reached a whole new level when Carlos brought singer Ronald Isley, guitarist Ernie Isley and backing vocalist Kandy Isley (Ron's wife) onto the stage. Now in his 77th year, Ron Isley's voice still packs a plentitude of soul power. This is the guy who sang classics like "Shout" (1959) and "Twist and Shout" (1962), songs that have become woven deep into the fabric of rock and roll repertoire. He performed sitting on a stool at the House of Blues, but got to his feet when the spirit moved him. Resplendent in a blingy, silver sequined vest over an all-black ensemble, Isley remains the consummate showman. And his venerable voice offered the perfect complement to Santana's own legendary guitar tone. Both are deeply steeped in the wisdom and truth that comes from decades of making musical history.

Younger sibling Ernie Isley is a more low-keyed performer, sporting shades, a black silk bandana and a beautifully inlaid Fender Custom Shop Stratocaster. A nuanced and funky rhythm player, he locks in with the band's drummer, Cindy Blackman Santana, forging flawless grooves.

"I found out Ernie played drums on a lot of the later Isley records," she says. "So he's got a natural groove on guitar—a nice soulful feel. And with the two-guitar thing, it's incredible—Carlos playing with his ferocity and liveliness, combined with that soulful vibe from both Ernie and Carlos. Ernie brings in some influences from the great guitar players he loved too. So, for me as a drummer, that's really wonderful to play with, because it's just funky and soulful, and you can't lose with that."

An accomplished jazz drummer who can bust out a mean Tony Williams/Billy Cobham style fusion solo, Blackman Santana can also lay down rock-solid grooves that drive the Santana band like a Lamborghini. Few jazz drummers can whack the two and four with that kind of conviction and authority. The power in Blackman Santana's playing belies her slim, compact frame, crowned with an abundant Afro.

"She's fierce," says Paul Reed Smith. "There's something ferocious about her playing. She feels like a lion."

Now in their sixth year of marriage, Carlos and Cindy are one of those close-knit couples who can finish one another's sentences, and frequently do so. Sharing a bond that is both musical and romantic, their upbeat, collective chemistry is palpable, both onstage and off. Both were equally keen to embark on the *Power of Peace* project with the Isleys. The record offers fresh interpretations of songs by artists that include Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, Billie Holiday, Curtis Mayfield, the Chambers Brothers, Burt Bacharach and others. It's a broad cross-section of both classic tunes and more deep album cuts. Most tend to be songs of freedom, empowerment and universal love—themes that resonate deeply at a time when intolerance and injustice are on the rise.

"It was a wonderful experience to work with Ernie, Ronnie and everybody," says Carlos, "collectively sculpting these songs that we've known for years. But when you hear the way we do them, they don't sound the way you heard them before. We've transmogrified them."

The Isleys and Carlos Santana first crossed paths back in 1973. Santana performed at a music industry conference at CBS Records; Ron and Ernie Isley were also in attendance. The elder Isley remembers that Carlos was less than thrilled to be playing before a crowd of drunk conventioneers.

"He had his back turned to the audience and said, 'This is for you gringos.' And he just turned it on. Ernie and I heard him play and thought, Wow, this guy is just phenomenal."

Both Santana and the Isley Brothers were at career high points in 1973. Already hailed as the godfather of Latino rock, Santana took a headlong dive into the then-emergent jazz-

(from left) Ronnie Isley, Ernie Isley, Carlos Santana and Cindy Blackman Santana

rock fusion genre with 1973's *Love Devotion Surrender* album, recorded with guitar master John McLaughlin. That same year, the Isleys were on top of the charts with "That Lady, Parts 1 & 2," a track that represented a quantum leap for them as well. A wah wah- and conga-fueled remake of an earlier record they'd released called "Who's That Lady," the 1973 recording is remarkable for bringing a massive dose of full-on, flangy rock guitar—played by Ernie Isley—into the R&B idiom. Santana's influence on Isley's lead guitar playing is clear.

"The track was highly rhythmic, funky and danceable," Ernie recalls. "And when the guitar went on top of it, it turned into something that none of us could have expected. We put lyrics on it and said, 'Okay, now we got a record.' "

The other guitarist whose influence on the track is unmistakable is Jimi Hendrix. This is hardly surprising, as Hendrix was the Isley Brothers' guitarist from 1963 through 1965, during his pre-fame tenure as a hard-working r&b sideman. For a while, Hendrix even shared a house in New Jersey with the Isleys. Ernie was just a kid at the time, wide-eyed with admiration.

"Ten years old," he says. "I was just starting on guitar. And of course any guitar you got around the house, you gonna be playing. Jimi too. So I'd sit around listening and observing. You never know how stuff will rub off on you."

Ernie also remembers Hendrix being impressed when the Beatles covered the Isleys' "Twist and Shout." The Fab Four's version was released in the U.S in March 1964, during Hendrix's time with the Isleys and shortly after the Beatles' American TV debut on the *Ed Sullivan Show* in February 1964.

"After the Beatles performed on *Ed Sullivan*, there was a meeting of all the band," Ernie recounts. "I looked over at Jimi Hendrix and said, 'Look at that band; they got two guitar players!' And my brother Kelly said, 'Yeah, but we got Jimi.' "

Ernie, who started performing with the Isleys in the Seventies, was a key figure in the group's transition from its initial incarnation as a vocal trio, consisting of Ron, Rudolph and O'Kelly Isley, to a self-contained band with Ernie on guitar, his brother Marvin on bass and brother-in-law Carl Jasper on keyboards. Sporting a headband and a Strat, Ernie channeled Hendrix heavily in those years. Even his manner of speaking, in a barely audible whisper, is reminiscent of the long-departed guitar hero.

"It was important at that time for the audience to know that the brothers is playin' the music and doing all the singin'," Ron notes. "That was the first *3 + 3* album the Isley Brothers did."

From the Seventies onward, both Santana and the Isley Brothers charted their own stellar courses through the popular music firmament, both consistently vaporizing stylistic boundaries and exploring new territories. The groundwork for the *Power of Peace* album was laid a few years ago, when Ron Isley met up with Carlos and Cindy Santana backstage at a concert where Santana was opening for Rod Stewart.

"I hope I didn't scare him," Carlos says with a laugh, "but I was on an avalanche of, like, 'Hey, I always wanted to work with you. I love your songs, man!' He was reserved at first, very dignified and respectful. But the more I played his songs for him on my iPod, the more he realized that I was really, really adamant and serious about doing something with him."

The singer was indeed impressed with Santana's encyclopedic command of the Isley catalog. He was even more touched when Carlos revealed that the first song he and Cindy danced to after they were married was Ron's

> "THESE SONGS DON'T SOUND THE WAY YOU'VE HEARD THEM BEFORE. **WE'VE TRANSMOGRIFIED THEM.** —SANTANA"

recording of "The Look of Love" from his 2003 album, *Here I Am: Isley Meets Bacharach*. Shortly thereafter, Carlos was in Miami, working on what would become 2016's *Santana IV* album, which reunited many members of the classic Seventies Santana lineup.

"And I get the voice inside saying, 'Hey, why don't you call Ronnie?" Carlos narrates. " 'Call him and ask him if he would sing these songs that you're writing. And if he sings these songs, then you can do a whole album with him.' So he sang 'Love Makes the World Go Round' and 'Freedom in Your Mind' on *Santana IV*, and the next thing you know, we're doing an album together."

"We started picking songs," Ron elaborates. "Carlos wanted to have his whole band on the record, and I wanted to have [*session keyboard ace*] Greg Phillinganes. So Carlos gathered them all up and we started the record. The band and the people who were involved in the record, that's a spiritual thing, man."

Isley adds that "Carlos picked a lot of the songs," many culled from the guitarist's legendarily broad and deep record collection.

"Dude, this is so funny," Cindy recounts. "When Carlos and I first got together, I think he wanted to test the waters and see where I was at, musically. We were in his kitchen, and he said 'Look in the cupboard.' I said, Okay, I don't know why he wants me to look in the cupboard. Maybe there's some food in there.' I look in there and it's all CDs piled all the way up. I loved it! CDs in the kitchen, CDs everywhere. You should see his iPod collection too. I love to brag about it because it's so incredible. I've got a lot of music. So when I meet somebody who has more than me, it's amazing. His collection is like a musical rolodex. I'll be, like, 'I got an idea for a song that kinda reminds me of...' He'll say, 'Hey baby, listen to iPod number 27.' "

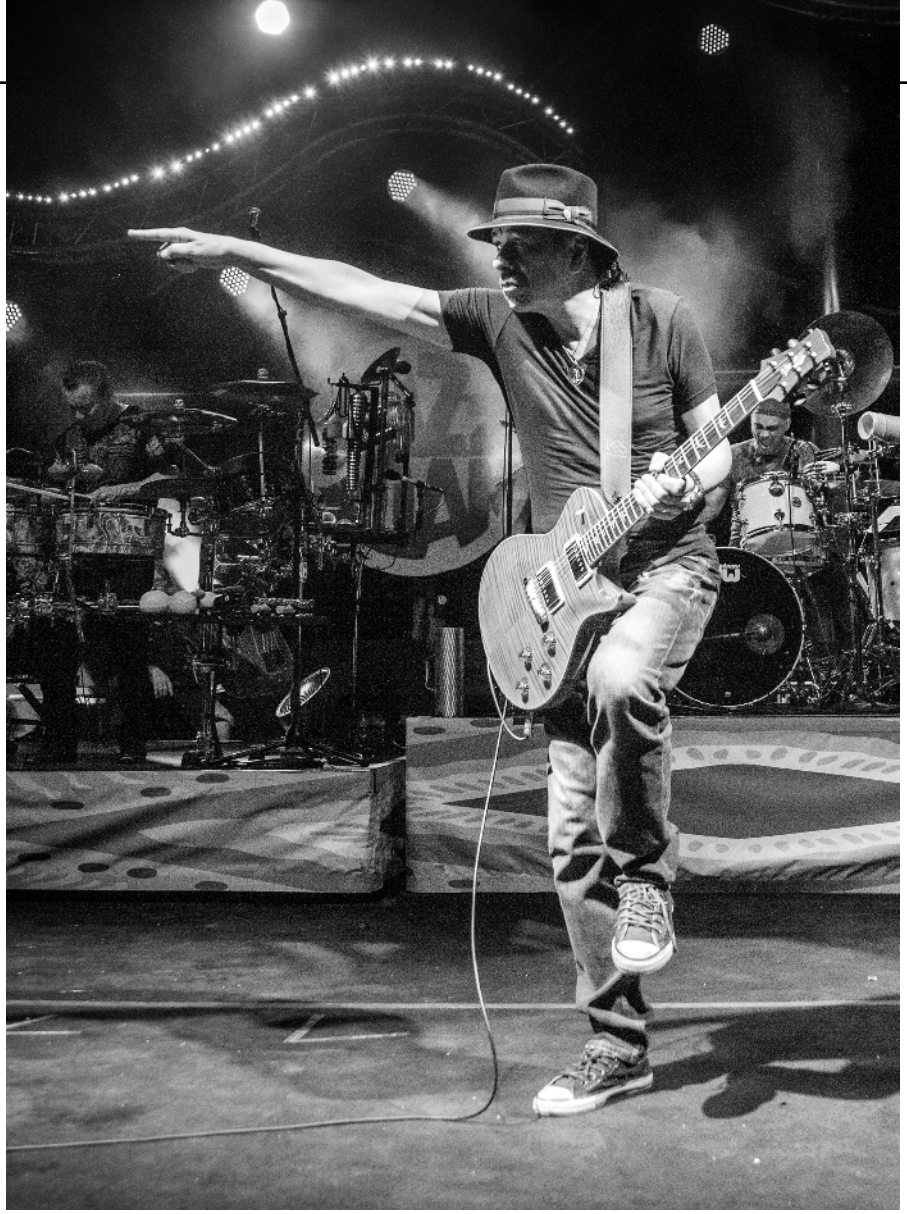
" 'Cause we both get haunted by that sound, that mystery melody," Carlos explains. "Where's that melody come from? And I usually know exactly where it is and how to access it. That's a very good thing to have, because there's no time-wasting."

It was Carlos' idea, for example, to do a version of Willie Dixon's blues classic "I Just Want to Make Love to You." "Ronnie confessed to me the other day, 'You know if it wasn't for you, I never would have done this song,' " says Carlos.

Many artists have recorded "I Just Want to Make Love to You," from Muddy Waters to the Rolling Stones to Foghat. But this is perhaps the first version to incorporate the main riff from Hendrix's "Foxey Lady."

"We were trying to get some testosterone in there," Ernie Isley deadpans.

But that was one of the key ideas behind the record—to put a new musical twist on some timeless material. "We talked about it, Cindy and I," Carlos says. "How do we get ourselves and Ronnie out of the comfort zone? How do we do something beyond the realm of what you feel inside. We did [*Curtis Mayfield's*] 'Gypsy Woman' more like Bob Marley and Paco de Lucia—the intro, you know? There's a great groove, some flamenco...all that, and then it turns into a song about a gypsy woman at a campfire. Whew!"



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The project offered plenty of opportunity for Carlos and Ernie Isley to bond as guitar buddies. "We were in the studio and Carlos starts playing and I hear that Santana tone," Ernie recounts. "But now it's the actual person who created that tone, standing right in front of me. He's playing and I've got a huge grin on my face, looking at him, like, 'Wow!' He stops playing, points at me and I start playing. And he looks up grinning and says, 'That sound, that tone, that's Isley! That's 'Who's That Lady.' So from that point of view, it was a real joy."

After all these years with a guitar in his hands, Carlos retains a youthful enthusiasm for the instrument. He's currently working with Paul Reed Smith on a new guitar model. The company isn't ready to release details yet. "You can say that we made Carlos a new style of instrument that he very much likes," is all that Smith will reveal. But Carlos, typically, is more expansive.

"I'm really excited that we're creating a new instrument that will hopefully motivate more youngsters to put the laptop aside—and the LinnDrum and *Guitar Hero*. Get yourself a real set of drums and real guitar and stop shuckin' and jivin'. To me, it's a call to arms. Get yourself a real guitar and you will see your destiny in front of you, shining and shimmering." GW

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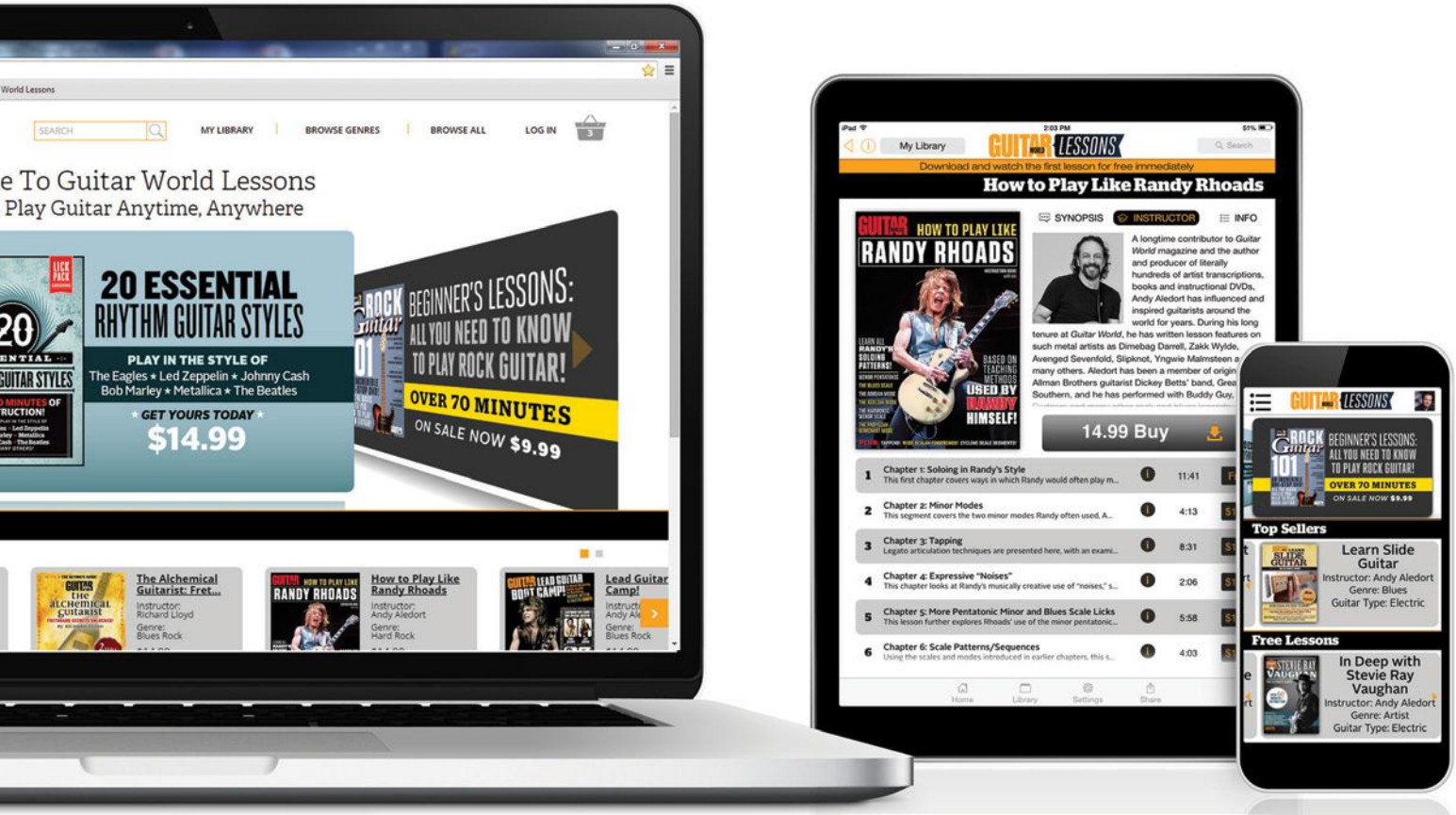

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GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

Modern Marvels

MITCHELL MD400 AND MS400

By Chris Gill

WHETHER YOU'RE A first-time guitar buyer or a professional with G.A.S. and a limited budget, there's never been a better time to be in the market for an affordable new guitar than the present. While it's been pretty easy to find a good electric solidbody with basic features and above average playability in the sub $500 range for the last 10 or 15 years, most of these instruments featured hardware, electronics and materials that placed them in the entry level category, making them useful only as temporary solutions before necessary upgrades. Recently the gap between entry level and professional guitars has become a lot narrower, as have the choices in the sub $500 range.

When we looked at Mitchell's HD400 and TD400 models a few issues ago, we loved how both models offered quality, playability and modern, custom design aesthetics normally only found on instruments costing two to four times more. Both of those models featured bolt-on necks, which we figured helped Mitchell keep construction costs at a minimum, but when they later sent us their MD400 and MS400 models, which both feature glued set-in necks, we were thrilled to discover that the overall quality and price remained the same. The MD400 and

MS400

MS400 also boast modern designs normally not found in this price range, along with upscale appointments and details that emphasize performance over the typical cost-cutting measures.

FEATURES The MD400 features an asymmetrical "Strat"-style double cutaway body, but with more contours and an arched top, the aforementioned set-in neck, and a dual pickup configuration. However, this is not the typical "super strat" as it also features a 3+3 tuner configuration on the headstock, a slim, seamless contour where the set-in neck joins the body, and a neck and body made of mahogany. Our example had the transparent forest green finish with AAA quilted maple veneer top also featured with the transparent purple and natural finish versions, while the black and transparent ocean blue finish models have a carved mahogany top. The body top and Indian rosewood fretboard are bound with five-layer binding. The neck provides 24 tall/narrow medium jumbo frets (slightly bigger than "vintage" frets), a 25 1/2-inch scale, 15 3/4-inch radius, and shallow "C" profile, and the back of the neck has a gloss finish that matches the body.

The MD400's electronics consist of an alnico V mini-humbucker with dual rail polepieces at the neck, a full-size alnico V humbucker also with dual rail polepieces at the bridge, individual volume controls for each pickup, a master tone control with pull coil tap function and a three-position blade pickup selector switch. Hardware includes knurled metal control knobs, a tuneomatic-style bridge with string-thru-body tailpiece, metal bridge pickup mounting ring and 18:1 die-cast locking tuners, all boasting a black nickel finish.

The MS400 has a modern single-cutaway design, and like the MD400 it also features a mahogany body and mahogany set-in neck with Indian rosewood fretboard. Upscale details and upgrades include flame maple binding surrounding the arched top and fretboard, comfortable belly and cutaway contours, slim neck heel and custom dual "slice" fretboard inlays. Neck features include a 24 ¾-inch scale, 11.8-inch radius, 22 jumbo frets and shallow "C" profile.

The MS400 provides a pair of alnico V humbuckers and also has individual volume controls for each pickup and a master tone control with pull coil tap function. Hardware includes 18:1 die-cast locking tuners, vintage-style "top hat bell" control knobs, tuneomatic-style bridge (also with string-thru-body anchoring), and three-position pickup toggle switch.

PERFORMANCE From the second one picks up the MD400 or MS400, it's obvious that quality was the primary concern of its construction. Each guitar is set up to play perfectly out of the box, requiring at most a simple truss rod adjustment to adjust for climate. The finish, binding, contour curves, fret work and more are simply stunning, but what's even more impressive are the "little" details, like the way the cavity for the output jack is angled to keep the cable out of the player's way or how the MS400's control knobs are recessed for playing comfort. The pickups also deliver their own distinct personality, with a voice-like midrange, tight bass and tonal versatility thanks to the coil-tap function. These are the kind of details that were previously non-existent on guitars selling for less than $500.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $449.99 (each, as shown)
MANUFACTURER: Mitchell Guitars, mitchellguitars.com

- Both the MD400 and MS400 feature set-in necks and bodies made of mahogany, Indian rosewood fretboards, and string-thru-body design.
- The MD400 has an alnico V mini-humbucker with dual rail polepieces at the neck and a full-size alnico V humbucker with dual rail polepieces at the bridge.
- The MS400 has a pair of full-size alnico V humbuckers with exposed zebra coil bobbins.
- Both offer upscale details like coil tapping, a recessed and angle output jack, fancy fretboard and body binding, and pro-quality electronics and hardware.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE** If you love the features, playability and style of a high-end custom solid-body but have an entry-level budget, the Mitchell MD400 and MS400 offer unbeatable value for a pro-quality ax that will last a lifetime.

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GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

Strum and Twang

MICHAEL KELLY HYBRID 55

By Chris Gill

ACOUSTIC-ELECTRIC GUITARS, which are essentially amplified acoustic instruments, are commonplace these days, but the electric-acoustic (or hybrid) guitar, which is an electric model with a special bridge or pickups that also produce amplified acoustic guitar tones and textures, is a much rarer beast. While a hybrid guitar is ideal for a primarily electric player who also needs immediate access to acoustic tones while performing onstage, these instruments long enjoyed only modest growth in popularity mainly because hybrid guitars are usually more expensive than their standard electric equivalents. The Michael Kelly Guitar Company broke the price barrier 10 years ago with the introduction of their Hybrid Special chambered body model, and now their Hybrid line has expanded to offer the Hybrid 55 solidbody, which offers boutique-quality features, design and construction.

FEATURES The Hybrid 55 has the same T-style single cutaway/bolt-on neck design of Michael Kelly's 1950s Series guitars as well as the Rockfield Mini humbucker (neck) and full-size Rockfield SWC humbucker bridge pickup configuration of that series' 1955 models. The body is a gorgeous slab of lightweight korina topped with a layer of flame maple with a glowing, deep amber-hued Tiger's Eye Burst finish. The neck is maple with a rosewood fretboard featuring a compound 10 1/2- to 16-inch compound radius, 22 medium jumbo frets, dot inlays, modern C profile and 25 1/2-inch scale. In addition to the Rockfield humbuckers, standard electric electronics consist of master volume and master tone controls that also activate push-pull coil tap functions for their respective pickups, a three-way blade pickup selector switch mounted on a chrome T-style control plate. A Fishman Powerbridge is the source of the Hybrid 55's acoustic tones, and its controls include a master volume located below the bridge along with a three-position toggle switch for selecting electric, blend or acoustic settings located on the upper bass bout.

PERFORMANCE Even without the hybrid features, the Hybrid 55 is a damn fine guitar, particularly for its insanely affordable price point. It's a great guitar for any style of music, as the full humbucker provides plenty of rowdy rockin' roar, the coil-tapped settings deliver classic sting and twang and the Fishman Powerbridge produces authentic acoustic textures that sound great on their own and provide impressive added depth and dimension when blended. The Hybrid 55 not only looks like it should cost two to three times as much—it also plays and sounds that way.

CHEAT SHEET

LIST PRICE: $1,100.00
MANUFACTURER: Michael Kelly Guitar Co., michaelkellyguitars.com

- The Fishman Powerbridge features built-in saddle pickups that produce authentic amplified acoustic tones that can be played on their own or blended with the magnetic pickups.
- Rockfield Mini (neck) and Rockfield SWC (bridge) humbuckers along with a coil tapping circuit provide a wide variety of tones for any style of music.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE** For the price of an entry level guitar, the Michael Kelly Hybrid 55 delivers all the electric and acoustic tones most players need for an entire night's gig as well as luxury features and pro-quality playability uncommon at even twice the price.

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Jimmy Eat World - with the OM7 Dynamic Vocal Microphone

GUITAR WORLD PLATINUM AWARD EXCELLENCE

The Ultimate Speed

ERNIE BALL MUSIC MAN MONARCHY SERIES MAJESTY

By Chris Gill

IF YOU'RE THE type of person who looks at a product's price before anything else, you may wonder what the new Music Man Monarchy Series Majesty offers for its nearly $3,000 street price that less expensive instruments don't have. The explanation is sort of like the difference between a Lamborghini Huracán and a Toyota 86—both are made from similar materials and can quickly get you from point A to point B, but the differences really become evident once you try both out. Like a Lamborghini Huracán, the Majesty is a sophisticated supercar of a guitar with incredible feel, comfort, responsiveness and playability unlike anything else out there. If you're the type of player who strives to play better than the rest and absolutely demands to always perform the best you possibly can (like Dream Theater guitarist John Petrucci, who is the model's primary designer), the Majesty is a very worthy investment.

FEATURES On the surface, the Majesty is a dual-humbucker shred machine with a floating tremolo bridge, but there is much, much more to it. The body is intricately and generously sculpted with comfortable, smooth curves and features a neck-thru-body Honduran mahogany neck seamlessly blended to an African mahogany body with a flame maple top that surrounds the pickups and bridge in a distinctive shield-like shape. The neck has a jet black ebony fretboard, 25 1/2-inch scale, 17-inch radius, 24 medium jumbo stainless steel frets and incredibly cool mirrored acrylic inlays that continue the shield motif and reflect even the slightest light for maximum visibility on dark stages. The neck's profile is shallow and relatively flat, and the matte finish on the back of the neck ensures a steady grip.

Every single detail on the Majesty reveals meticulous refinement and attention to detail. The nut is compensated and made of black melamine to provide the perfect balance of grip and slip that always returns the string to its initial, desired placement and keeps the guitar perfectly in tune. Schaller M6-IND locking tuners also keep the tuning rock solid. The electronics are all first-rate, consisting of a pair of DiMarzio Sonic Ecstasy humbuckers and a custom John Petrucci Music Man piezo pickup system built into the floating tremolo's saddles. Controls consist of only three knobs and two toggle switches, but they provide a vast universe of awesome magnetic and acoustic-like piezo tones thanks to versatile custom series/parallel wiring configurations and push/push control knobs that activate coil splitting with the magnetic pickup master tone control, a +20dB active preamp with the magnetic master volume, and mono/stereo output with the piezo volume. One other subtle but important detail is the graphite acrylic resin-coated body cavity and aluminum control cover that completely eliminate noise.

PERFORMANCE In the hands, the Music Man Monarchy Series Majesty feels like a true luxury instrument with incredibly smooth, comfortable curves in all the right places. Even the strap buttons are perfectly located to provide balance and place the neck in an ideal playing position. What's really remarkable is how the Majesty feels like nothing at all, with just the neck and strings beckoning the player's unimpeded touch, leaving nothing in the way to restrict the performance. And like a Lamborghini Huracán, the Majesty delivers a powerful, mighty roar thanks to its Sonic Ecstasy pickups, which are boldly aggressive yet deliver every finest articulate detail and nuance of a player's technique. The piezo pickups deliver acoustic-like rhythm zing and can enhance treble detail when blended with the magnetic pickups. The floating tremolo is an engineering masterpiece that never goes out of tune and can easily be manipulated to drop or rise to desired notes with precision.

CHEAT SHEET

- **STREET PRICE:** $2,999.00
  MANUFACTURER: Ernie Ball Music Man, music-man.com
- The pair of DiMarzio Sonic Ecstasy humbuckers, piezo saddle pickups and versatile wiring provide a vast multitude of tones.
- Smooth contours, neck-through-body construction, balanced body shape and an overall weight less than seven pounds adds up to unimpeded playability.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE**
  For guitarists who strive to always play at their peak and who need a wide variety of tones accessible at their fingertips, the Music Man Monarchy Series Majesty is worth every penny for discriminating players who demand the best.

Buzz Bin

Music Nomad Octopus 8'n1 Tech Tool

Right now, my guitar's gig bag's zipper pouch is so overstuffed that it looks like I've packed for a picnic. Truth is, that pouch is filled with the essentials: picks, strings, capos, slides, headstock tuner, string winder and the main protruding offenders—multiple guitar tools. No doubt, it's better to be over prepared than not when a guitar crisis arises, but I probably could remove a lot of these tools. Luckily, a new guitar gadget I received from Music Nomad just might be the answer to lighten my load. It's called the Octopus, an eight-in-one tech tool the size of a screwdriver that can handle many guitar-related jobs that require tightening and setup adjustments.

The innovative Octopus 8'n1 Tech Tool can conveniently adjust output jacks, control pots, tuning machine bushings and screws with ease. It features both a Phillips #1 and flat-head screwdriver with a reversible shaft design similar to those prevalent orange screwdrivers you find in Home Depot.

At the top of the Octopus are five popular hex wrench sizes: 10mm, 12mm, 14mm, 1/2-inch and 7/16-inch. The hex wrenches are made with a strong ballistic nylon material that won't scratch your hardware or finish like metal wrenches. You can also remove the screwdriver tip and use the 1/2-inch narrow profile hex wrench for tightening sunken pots and Tele cups. Not only does it work with most string instruments such as guitar, bass, ukulele, banjo and mandolin, it also works on hex nuts found on guitar pedals and amplifiers.

The Octopus works exactly as it's supposed to, as I handily tightened all the input jacks on the many electric guitars we have lying around the office, which as we guitarists know, always come loose. For a compact all-in-one solution, the Octopus is an indispensible tool.

—Paul Riario

STREET PRICE: between $12.99 and $14.99
MANUFACTURER: Music Nomad, musicnomadcare.com

New EQ
WHAT'S NEW AND COOL

PRS Guitars

JOHN MAYER LIMITED EDITION PRIVATE STOCK SUPER EAGLE II

John Mayer's main guitar for the Dead & Company tour has been the PRS Super Eagle, and now PRS Guitars has made Mayer a second version of that instrument with some updated woods and aesthetic appointments. The PRS Guitars Super Eagle II is a special-run instrument that features a longer 25.375–inch scale length, specially wound 58/15 JM treble and bass pickups with a specially wound Narrowfield JM pickup in the middle position (with three individual coil-tap mini-switches), a JCF Audio preamp with treble boost, as well as a hand-signed sticker in the f-hole of the guitar. The Super Eagle II also includes a one-piece Private Stock curly maple back, African Blackwood fingerboard and headstock veneer, paua birds and a green ripple abalone 12th fret violin bird and Private Stock eagle, as well as a brand-new Hemp Green finish. The Private Stock Super Eagle II will be limited to 120 instruments.

LIST PRICE $11,500
prsguitars.com

Boss

MS-3 MULTI EFFECTS SWITCHER

The Boss MS-3 Multi Effects Switcher is a new-concept pedalboard that combines a Boss multi-effects engine and multi-pedal switcher in a small, integrated unit. The MS-3 can run up to six internal pedal effects at once, and can also seamlessly integrate three external pedals. The pedalboard includes a backlit LCD to show patch/bank numbers and parameters, 111 onboard effects types, plus a dedicated noise suppressor and built-in tuner. The MS-3 offers deep rig control capabilities, which allow users to switch amp channels, adjust effects in real time, work with MIDI devices and more.

LIST PRICE $559.99
Boss.info

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GUITAR WORLD GOLD AWARD PERFORMANCE

Dano-mite!

DANELECTRO '59 RESONATOR

By Paul Riario

DANELECTRO OFFERS MANY stellar reproductions of their iconic guitars, most notably, The '64, '66 and 1959 guitars, which many hip musicians and garage rockers have adopted as their primary go-to guitars. But if you ask me, a few of my favorite Danelectros are the specialty ones like their 12 String guitar and Baby Sitar that I've often used in serviceable roles for live performances and in the studio. These two instruments come complete with modern updates, captivating tones and solid intonation that make performing with them an upbeat experience.

Lately I've been playing a lot of slide guitar, which has put me on the hunt for an affordable resonator-style six-string with electronics. I didn't have to look far because Danelectro released their brand-new '59 Resonator, a bright-sounding resonator with powerful pickups that will certainly appeal to those of us who love the steel guitar tones found in Mississippi Delta blues music and bluegrass.

FEATURES The '59 Resonator looks similar to the Danelectro 1959 model with a double-cut shorthorn shaped hollow body that gives the guitar its total retro charm. The '59 features a spun cone biscuit resonator, a perforated diamond plate cover, 25-inch scale length, 21 frets, clear satin maple neck with rosewood fingerboard, polished aluminum nut and vintage-style tuners.

The heart of the '59 is its electronics that combine a Danelectro '56 lipstick pickup in the neck position and a "special design" Schatten piezo pickup mounted inside the resonator cone. The guitar has three oversized knobs for volume and tone, and a blend control for either the lipstick or piezo. The blend knob has a center detent for a 50/50 mix of the two.

PERFORMANCE What's immediately noticeable is the '59 Resonator's spot-on setup and easy playability. The action is set at a comfortable height to seamlessly switch between playing slide and fingerpicking, and the polished fretwork is some of the best I've seen for a budget-priced resonator. The slim neck profile combined with its bouncy string tension makes playing the '59 a cakewalk.

Acoustically, the guitar is bright and raw sounding, but plugged in to an amp, the '59 comes alive with raspy sparkle, especially when setting the blend control dead center for what I consider its ideal sweet spot. The higher output resonator pickup can easily mimic some electric banjo tones but needs the balance of its ballsy lipstick pickup that adds warmth and body in order to achieve its steel-cut resonator sound.

CHEAT SHEET

STREET PRICE: $599.00
MANUFACTURER: Danelectro, danelectro.com

- A "special design" Schatten piezo pickup mounted inside the cone offers bright resonator growl with incredible output.
- Its '56 Danelectro lipstick pickup adds body to the '59 Resonator's metallic ring.
- **THE BOTTOM LINE** The Danelectro '59 Resonator is solidly built with a clean setup and punchy pickups for bluesy resonator tones that slice through.

What Clients are saying about the Stauer Guitar Watch

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"This thing ROCKS."
— *N. from Phoenix, AZ*

★★★★★

"It keeps great time and has stood up to band practice very well!"
— *E. from Philadelphia, PA*

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"I was absolutely blown away."
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As a kid, I stood hypnotized in front of the guitar shop window. I stared at the Gibsons, Fenders, Rickenbackers and Les Pauls, lined up like lacquered mahogany and maple trophies. With their smooth curves, each one could produce hot licks, reverb and a wailing solo. The six string guitar is the heart of rock and roll. I'm proud to say that today I feel the same way about the new Stauer ***Guitar Watch***.

We wanted to give our favorite vintage electric guitars their due with an impressive timepiece that captures the excitement of the golden years of rock and roll. The Stauer ***Guitar Watch*** is a legendary timepiece with bold, head-turning design and attitude to spare. It's rebellious enough to feel like you're getting away with something.

Meet your new favorite rock star. My only advice to the designers was to make a watch that looks exactly like rock and roll sounds. Big, bold and loud enough to wake the neighbors. It should evoke images of Bill Haley, Buddy Holly, The King and The Boss strumming crowds into a frenzy. But it should also reverberate with the spirit of the world's greatest rock guitar gods like Jimi, Eric and Keith (who was featured on the cover of *Rolling Stone* magazine wearing a Stauer watch). As you can see, the final product is worthy of a standing ovation.

It's only rock and roll, but we like it. One look at the Stauer ***Guitar Watch's*** voluptuous stainless steel body will bring you right back to the glory days of 45 and 33 rpm records. The eye-catching shape of the case recalls the round-bottomed bodies of the greatest vintage electric guitars.

The unique, ivory-colored face features blue Roman numerals on the left of the dial and bold Arabic numbers on the right. Blued, Breguet-style hands keep time while additional complications mark the day, date and month. A date window sits at the 3 o'clock position. Inside, the 27-ruby-jewel movement utilizes an automatic self-winding mechanism that never needs batteries. The watch secures with a genuine black leather band and is water-resistant to 3 ATM.

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COLUMNS

STRING THEORY

By Jimmy Brown

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/Sept2017

EERIE ARPEGGIOS, PART 2

Demented string skipping

BUILDING UPON THE eerie-sounding Aadd♭2 arpeggio sequence we explored in the previous lesson, I'd now like to offer a variation on this four-note entity that has a similarly haunting vibe while incorporating a wider interval (pitch gap) between the second and third notes, which creates a more angular and interesting melodic contour. What we'll do here is raise the pitches of the top two notes a perfect fourth, by keeping the fingers at the same frets while moving them over to the next higher string, thus introducing a string skip.

FIGURE 1 is a legato sequence, incorporating every available hammer-on, that begins with the four-note Aadd♭2 (A B♭ C♯ E) shape, or "cell," I introduced last month, which alternates with our new string-skipping shape on beat two of bar 1. With the new shape, instead of playing the notes C♯ and E (the major third and perfect fifth of A) on the B string again, we're substituting F♯ and A on the high E string, fingered at the same frets. In the key of A, F♯ is the major sixth, so we'll call our new arpeggio, which is intervallically spelled 1 ♭2 6 1 (ending on the root note an octave higher) A6♭2 (A B♭ F♯ A), The string skip gives us a major sixth interval, which is rather wide and has a "yodel-y" quality when played melodically. I resolve the sequence with a bluesy lick, sliding up the high E string to the minor third of A, C, which I then bend up a half step to the major third, C♯, before pulling off to the A root note at the fifth fret.

In **FIGURE 2**, we're taking our yodel-y A6♭2 shape and transposing it up the neck in three-fret increments, in symmetrical minor thirds, just as we had done with the Aadd♭2 shape in the previous lesson, to create a twisted, slinky-sounding "nightmare run." Notice that we're repeating each four-note cell before moving to the next one, which gives our eyes, brains and fingers more time to anticipate each shift.

As was the case with our previous lesson, all the examples I'm showing you here are based on the A half-whole diminished scale (A B♭ C C♯ E♭ E F♯ G) and sound cool when played over an A, A5 or A7 chord or an A bass note. And, again, experiment with reversing the note contour (playing each four-note cell backward), as well as alternate picking with palm muting, for a more aggressive, percussive attack.

In **FIGURE 3**, I move our A6♭2 shape over to the D and G strings and five frets higher, which gives us the same four notes (A B♭ F♯ A), then proceed to do the alternating tritones thing, by moving that same shape up one fret and back over to the G and high E strings. Notice how I resolve the phrase with a bluesy bend and some vibrato.

FIGURE 4 has you initially doing the same alternating tritones pattern from **FIGURE 3** an octave lower, using a different physical shape, for which you lead with the middle finger instead of the index. We do that eight-note sequence three times, then move across the strings in bar 2, staying in position and using the index-finger shape again for the last two cells.

Like **FIGURE 2**, our final example (**FIGURE 5**) moves the A6♭2 shape up the G and high strings in minor thirds, but here we're employing hybrid picking (pick-and-fingers technique) to articulate every note and play a jagged melody that continuously changes direction and skips strings. Be sure to shift your fretting hand as indicated.

FIG. 1

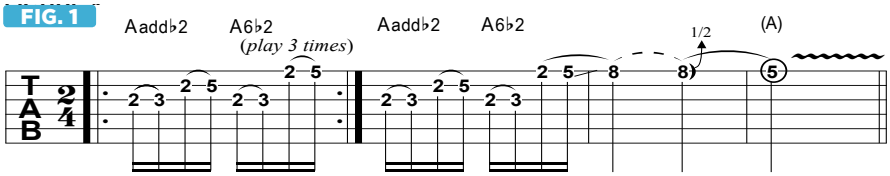


FIG. 2

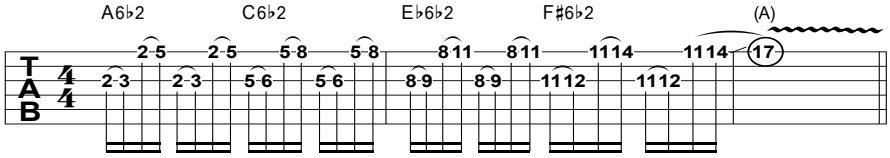


FIG. 3

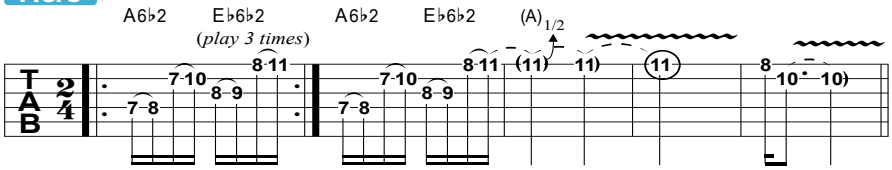


FIG. 4

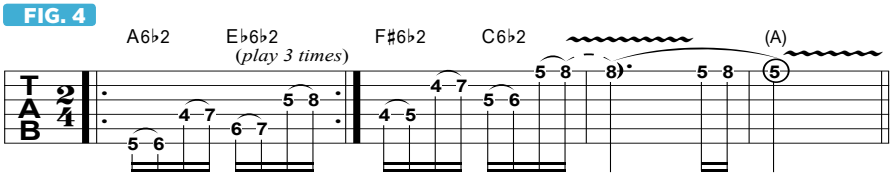
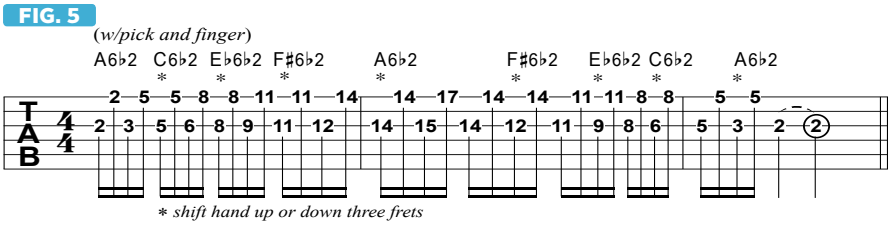


FIG. 5



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COLUMNS

ACOUSTIC NATION

by Dale Turner

For audio of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/Sept2017

BIG HOUSE

Son House's Delta Blues

EDWARD JAMES "SON" HOUSE (1902–1988), born and raised in the Mississippi Delta (Northwest section of MS, the birthplace of the blues), was a preacher, pastor and singer in his youth, his strong religious beliefs making him hostile to blues and all secular music. But hearing a friend play slide guitar changed House's perspective forever. At age 25, instantly "converted," he acquired a guitar and was gigging within weeks, his first record issued in 1930. During the Great Depression, the guitarist's records didn't sell well, but the local sensation influenced the likes of Robert Johnson and Muddy Waters. House's 1941-42 "archival" recordings by ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax (for the Library of Congress) should've been his last; he moved to Rochester, New York, quitting music to work as a railroad porter and chef in 1943.

Fast forward to 1964, the folk/blues revival in full swing, House's recordings are "rediscovered" by record collectors, and invitations to tour/record begin pouring in. Interestingly, Canned Heat guitarist Alan Wilson (a huge House fan) helped the blues legend relearn his original songs! From the Sixties onward, House—and his use of National resonator guitars ("Style O")—influenced music makers from Buddy Guy, Eric Clapton and Jimmy Page, to Jack White, Derek Trucks and Warren Haynes.

House often used open-G tuning, at times sounding a half step or more sharp, due to either tuning by ear without a reference pitch or recording equipment tape-speed calibration inaccuracies. "Levee Camp Moan," like **FIGURE 1**, shows his patented open-position blues moves (bars 1 and 3), with the lower strings thumb-strummed on each beat, while upper strings sound from upward index finger "flicks." Bar 2 illustrates House's "moveable" dominant chord ("C7"), its low/high notes strummed in alternation. The guitarist makes the fifth-to-eighth fret stretch with his *middle finger*, but the pinkie is fine; your ring finger should have a slide on it, required in the final bar.

"Death Letter Blues," House's signature song (covered by Derek Trucks, the White Stripes, Gov't Mule and the Grateful Dead), intermingles low string single-note riffs (bar 3) with upper-register slide moves, as in **FIGURE 2**. Note the variation of our earlier "dominant chord shape" (bars 1-2); House strums strings 1–3 with his index and middle fingers in filmed performances of this song.

In "Mississippi Country Farm Blues," House grooves on a fun chord/slide pattern (bar 1), requiring a downward finger strum of strings 1–3 (beats two and four), while the thumb thumps the open fifth string and the index finger picks the lone slide-fretted note. Bars 2–4 and 6–8 feature a variety of single-note slide lines—ample material to hone your slide intonation!

Open-D tuning is another Son House staple, used for "Preachin' the Blues," which inspires **FIGURE 4**. A mix of techniques covered so far, "Preachin' " includes new subtleties—a hammer-on *with the slide* (bar 1's beat "four") and bent double-stops (bar 2's second-string bends with the middle finger). For a great and convenient overview of House's work, check out *The Legendary Son House: Father of Folk Blues* (1965), which includes most of the songs mentioned herein.

Pick-hand fingerings: p = thumb i = index finger
⬒ = downstrum w/thumb (except Fig. 3)
∨ = upstrum w/index finger (Figs. 2 and 4 use index *and* middle fingers)

FIG. 1 **(♫ = ♩ ♪) open G tuning (low to high, D G D G B D)**

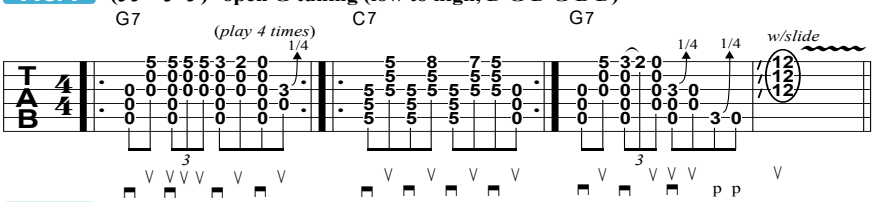


FIG. 2 **open G tuning**

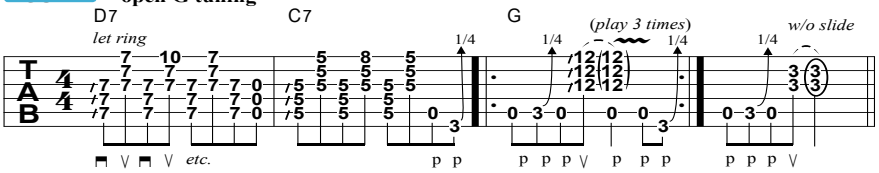


FIG. 3 **open G tuning**

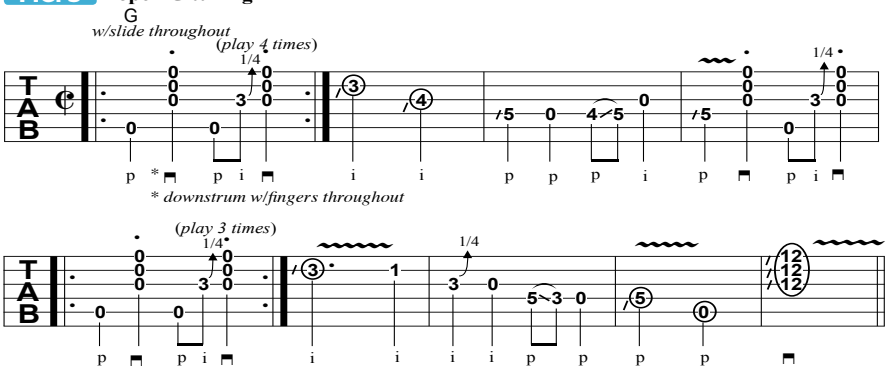
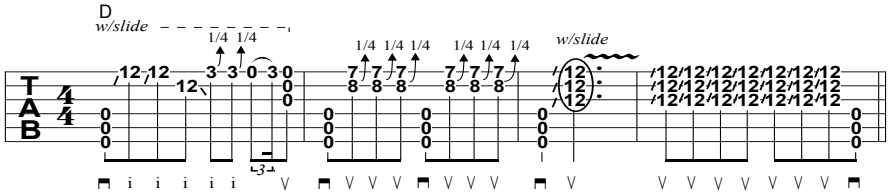


FIG. 4 **open D tuning (low to high, D A D F♯ A D)**



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IN DEEP
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DUAL MAJOR

Incorporating the major third across multiple octaves in a blues-based solo

LAST MONTH WE explored the concept of interjecting the major third into solo lines based primarily on the minor pentatonic and blues scales. This results in a chromatic row, from the minor third up to the fifth, which offers tremendous room for melodic experimentation. In this lesson, we'll explore that approach further and expand it across multiple octaves.

In the key of E, the scale most often used for blues-rock-based soloing is the E blues scale (E G A B♭ B D), which is intervallically spelled 1 ♭3 4 ♭5 5 ♭7. The major third of E is G♯, which is two whole steps above the E root. Adding the major third like this results in the note series E G G♯ A B♭ B D, (intervallically spelled 1 ♭3 3 4 ♭5 5 ♭7), with a chromatic row between the minor, or "flatted," third, G, and the fifth, B: G G♯ A B♭ B.

FIGURE 1 is a 12-bar solo played over a slow blues groove in the key of E. For instructional purposes, I remain in fourth/fifth position for virtually the entire solo. Restricting oneself to a single position like this across an entire 12-bar solo forces the player to make the most of what's available under your fingers on each string. I begin the solo with a reference to the major third by bending the minor third, G, up one half step to G♯. Keep in mind that G♯ is a chord tone for the one chord, E7, which is built from the notes E, G♯, B and D. Bends like these work well to emulate the human voice, which is a key element in expressive blues guitar soloing. As you play through these initial licks, you'll find some tricky rhythmic phrasings, so play through each beat, or each eighth note in the eighth-note triplet, to be sure you're playing the phrases correctly. In bar 2 into bar 3, I emphasize the flatted fifth, B♭, repeatedly moving from B♭ to B through the phrase.

In bar 5, over the four chord, A7, I include F♯, the second, as a passing tone between G and E. The phrases played through these bars encompass what's known as the "B.B. box," named after blues guitar great B.B. King. Bar 7 includes a brief move up to eighth position, with the major third sounded via a bend one octave higher than our starting pitch. I then use the B.B. box as a means to move back down to fourth/fifth position.

FIGURES 2 and **3** offer a more concise look at the B.B. box combined with the E blues scale. **FIGURE 4** details the ♭5-to-5 idea (B♭ to B), and **FIGURE 5** demonstrates an effective method for combining this chromatic movement with that of the minor third to the major third (G to G♯), resulting in sliding sixth intervals.

FIG. 1

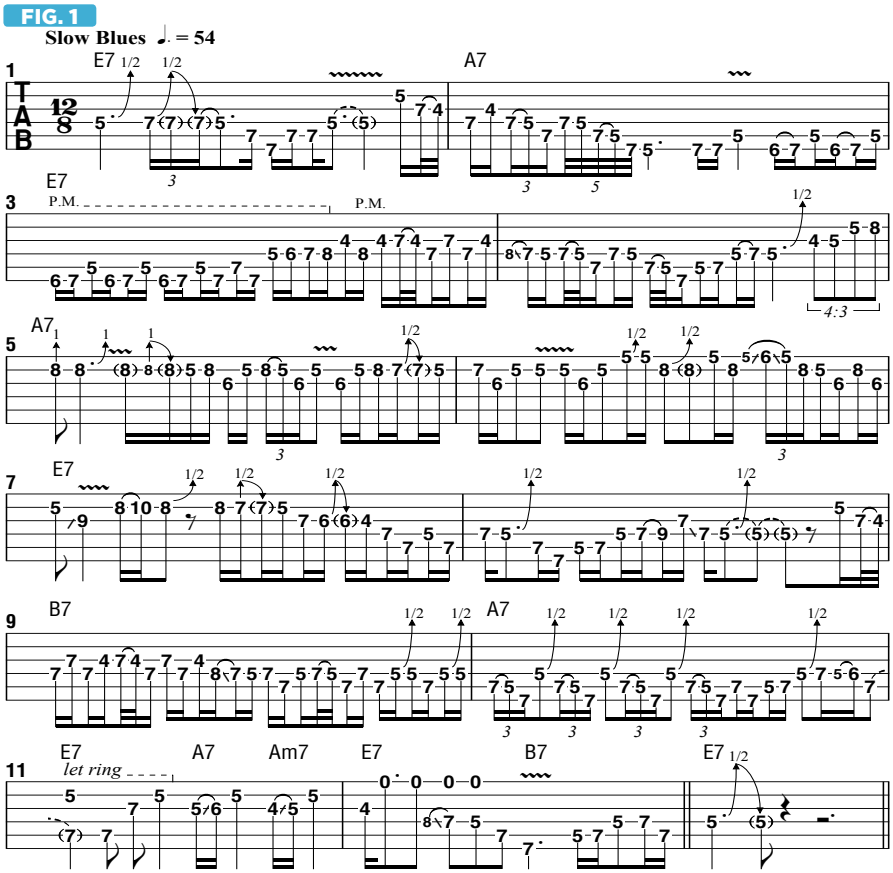


FIG. 2

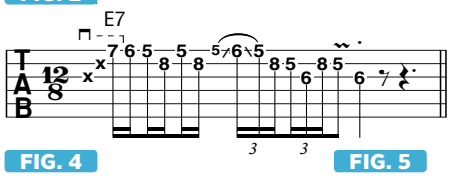


FIG. 3 "B.B. box"

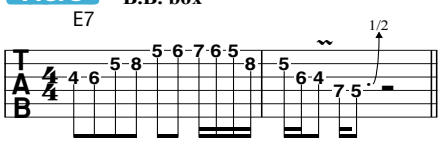


FIG. 4

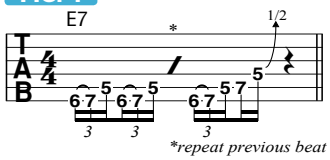
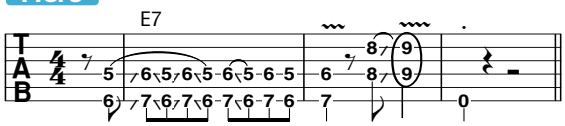


FIG. 5



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COLUMNS

ALL OR NOTHING

by Oli Herbert of All That Remains

For video of this lesson, go to GuitarWorld.com/Sept2017

PLAY TO WIN

My "Victory Lap" solo

THIS MONTH, I'd like to detail the guitar solo I crafted for the All That Remains song "Victory Lap," as heard on 2015's *The Order of Things*. As always, when composing this solo, I considered the elements that already exist in the composition, such as the various themes and variations that are built into it, and the rhythmic interplay between each of the licks as the solo progresses. The "direction of the line" is my guiding concept.

FIGURE 1 illustrates the rhythm part played behind the solo: this 18-bar passage consists mostly of whole-note and half-note power chords, with eighth- and 16th-note palm muted accents added in bars 8, 9 and 11. The overall tonality is based on the relative major/minor axis of the keys of A major and F♯ minor.

FIGURE 2 details the main riff of "Victory Lap," which is built from steady eighth-note arpeggios that outline the progression A-E-F♯m. When playing through this part, be sure to palm-mute the open low E and A strings throughout. In formulating the guitar solo, my goal was to reference and incorporate the melodic nature of this part. The result is shown in **FIGURE 3**: sounding mostly eighth notes, this line makes direct reference to the chord shift from A to E, resolving to the relative minor, F♯m, at the end of the phrase. That riff is harmonized on the recording a third higher, diatonic to the A major scale (A B C♯ D E F♯ G♯), via the line shown in **FIGURE 4**.

Through the next sections, I tried to push the intensity of the solo a little higher as it progresses, in the style of Queen's Brian May. **FIGURE 5** is built from an ascending eighth-note triplet pattern that's also based on the A major scale, followed with the line in **FIGURE 6**, wherein the concept is re-configured in straight 16th notes.

Over C♯5, I switch to an F♯ diminished seven arpeggio, illustrated in bar 1 of **FIGURE 7**, which moves across three octaves, followed by a fast legato run sounded with repeating hammer/pulls on the high E string along with a single fretboard tap. The pre-chorus is up next, so I borrowed from the vocal melody to play the relatively simple phrase shown in **FIGURE 8**, which concludes with a quickly descending F♯m arpeggio.

FIGURE 9 shows the final solo phrase, which is based on the chorus vocal melody while also revisiting ascending eighth-note triplet rhythms. To me, this solo unifies the composition overall while also serving to move it forward in musicality and intensity.

This is my last column for the time being. I hope you enjoyed these lessons and look forward to seeing you out on the road!

Tune down one and one half steps (low to high, C♯ F♯ B E G♯ C♯).
All music sounds one and a half steps lower than written.

FIG. 1

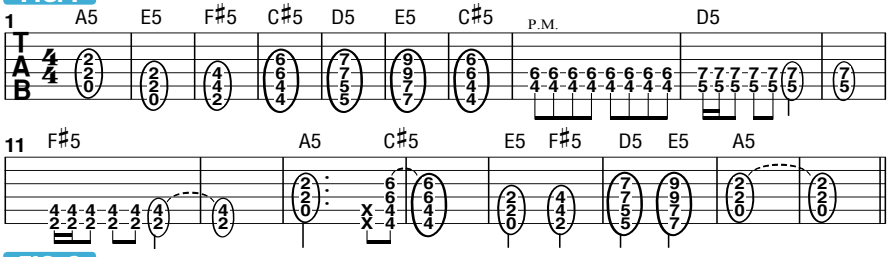


FIG. 2

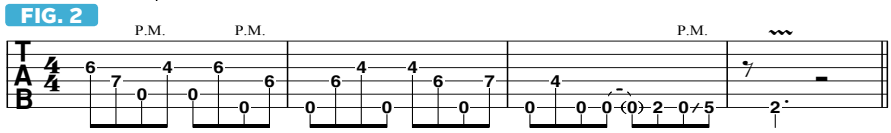


FIG. 3

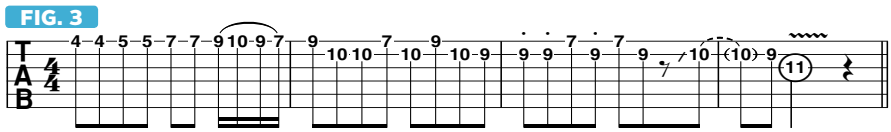


FIG. 4

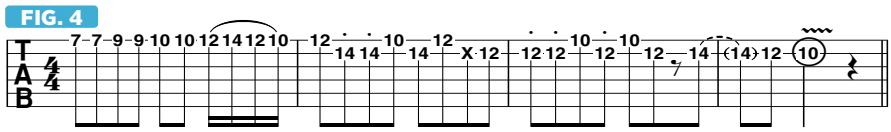


FIG. 5

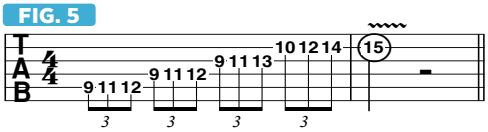


FIG. 6

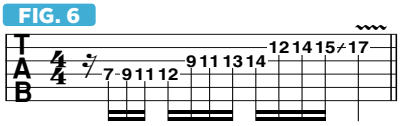


FIG. 7

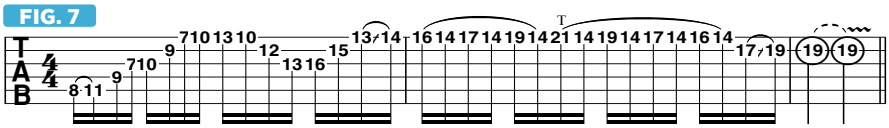


FIG. 8

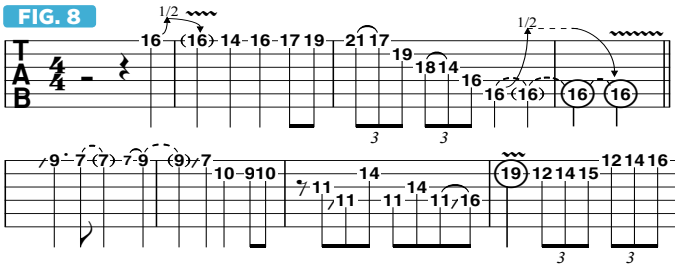
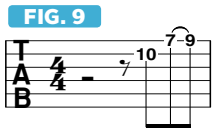


FIG. 9



Oli Herbert is the lead guitarist and a founding member of the critically acclaimed American metal band All That Remains, whose eighth studio album, *Madness*, is available now.

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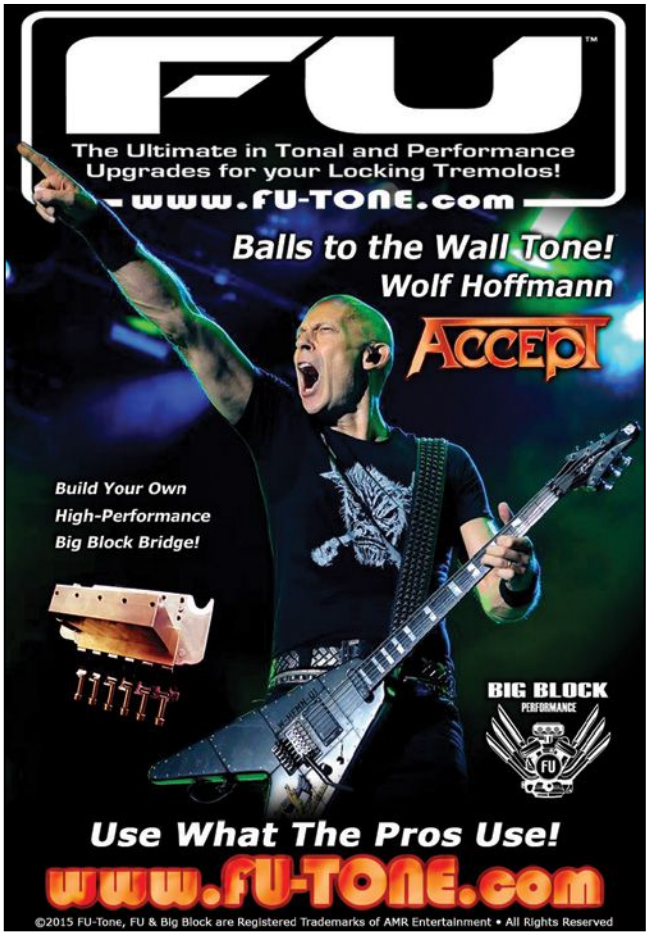
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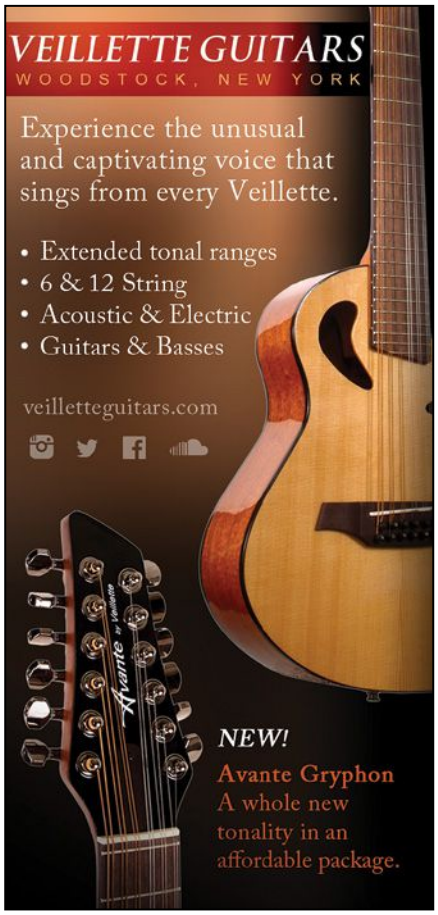
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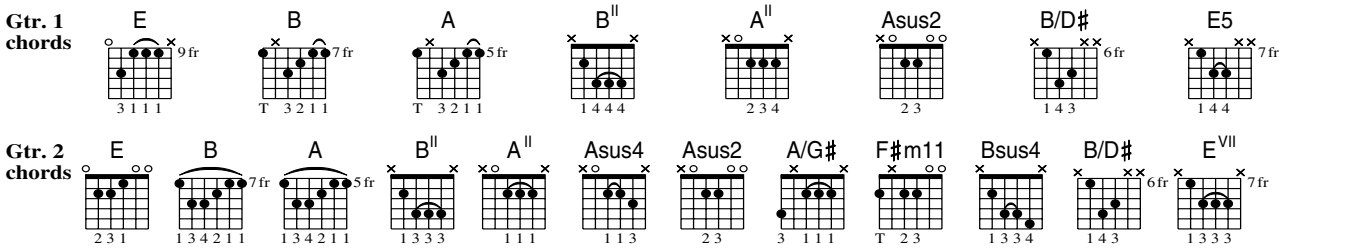
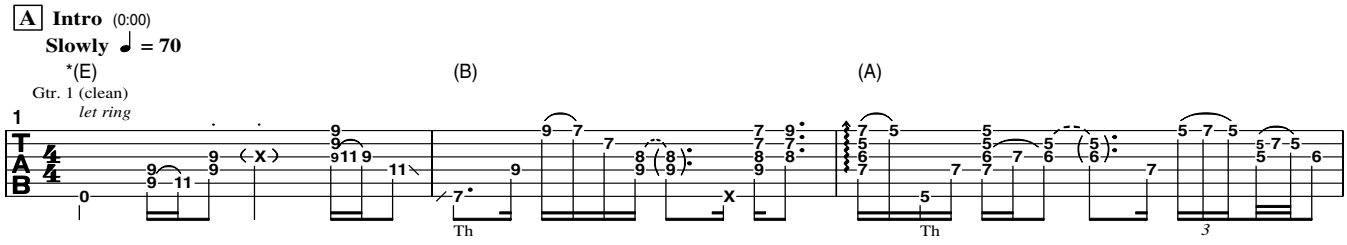
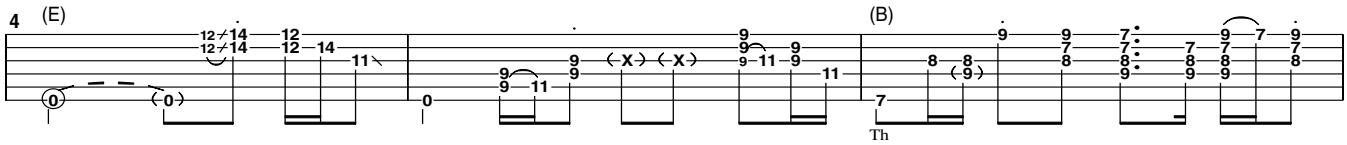
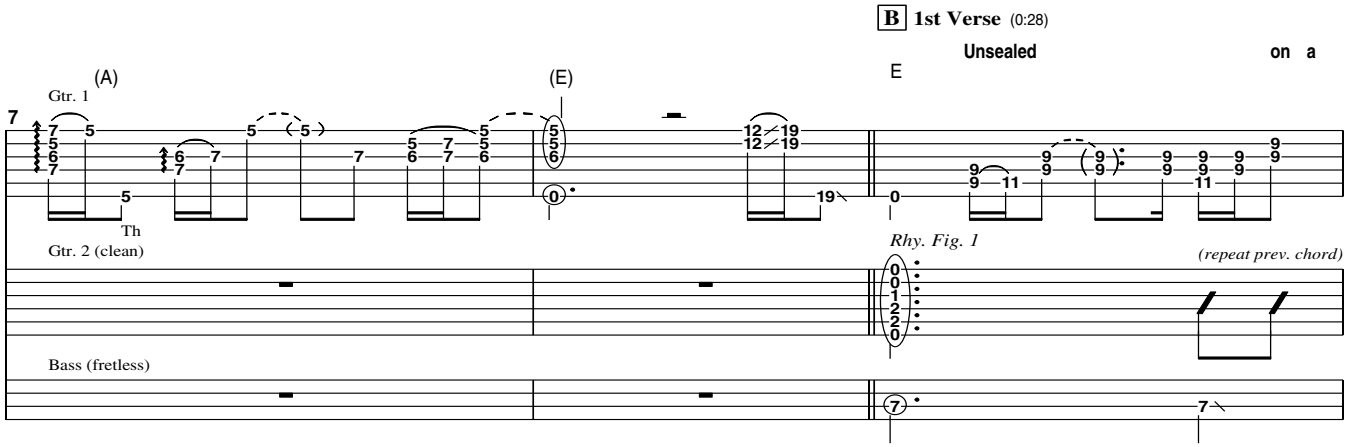
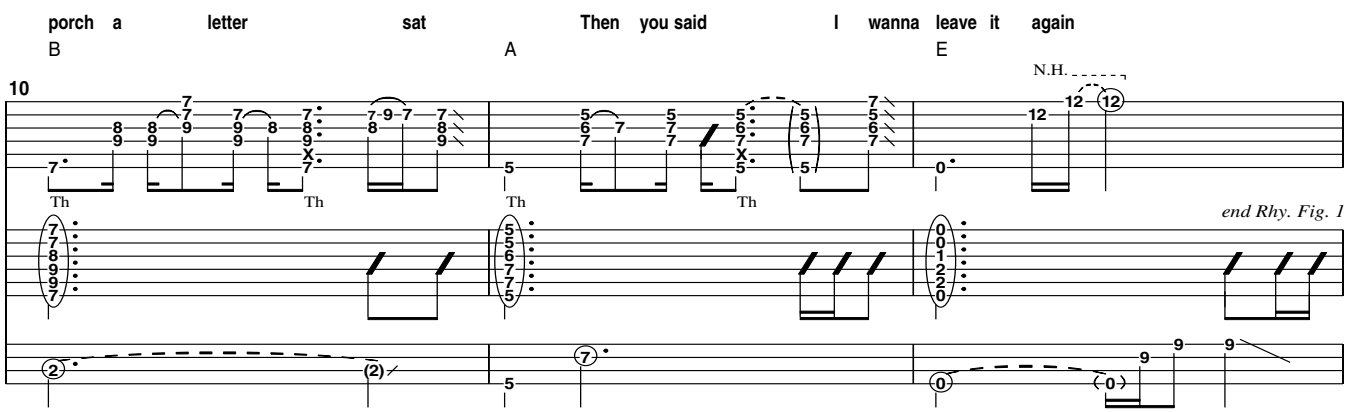




**Chord names in parentheses reflect basic underlying harmony.*







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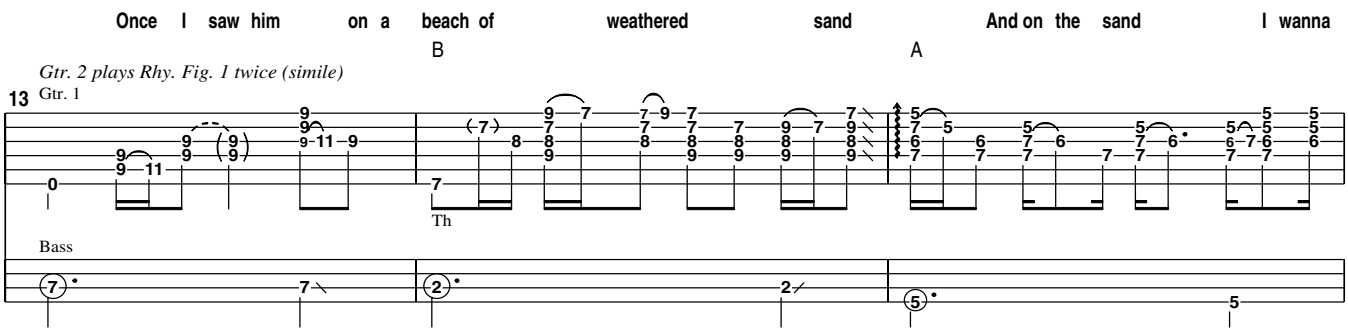
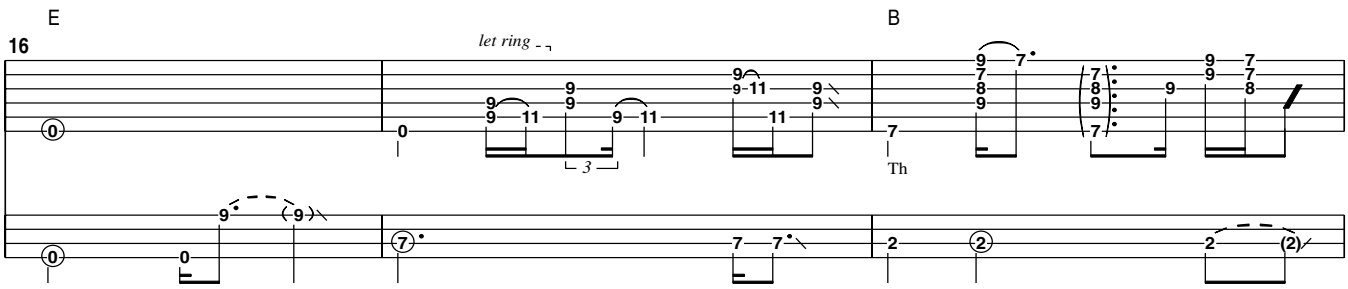
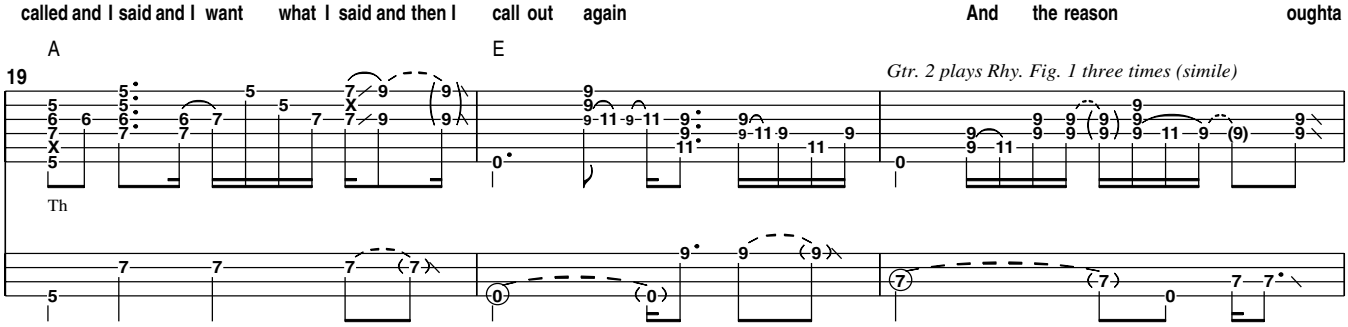
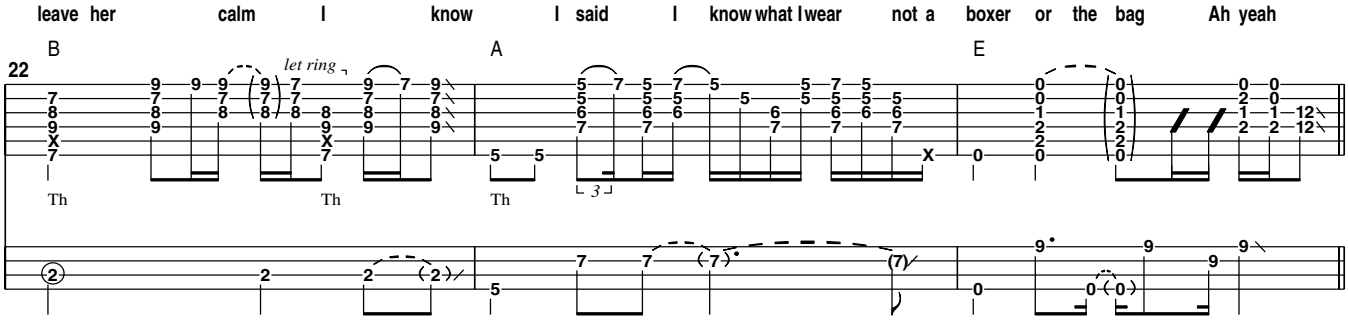
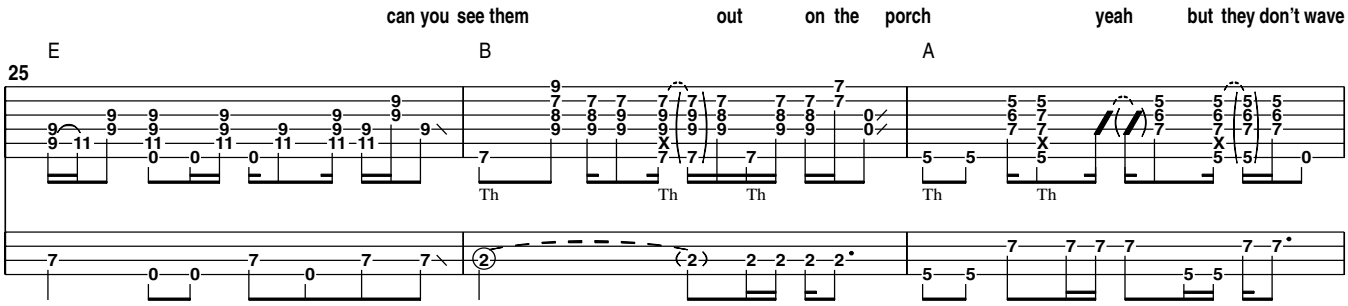


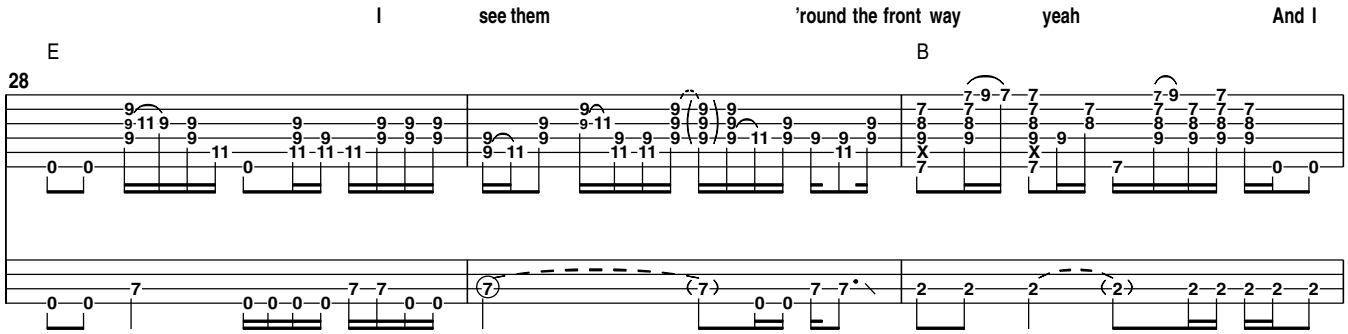




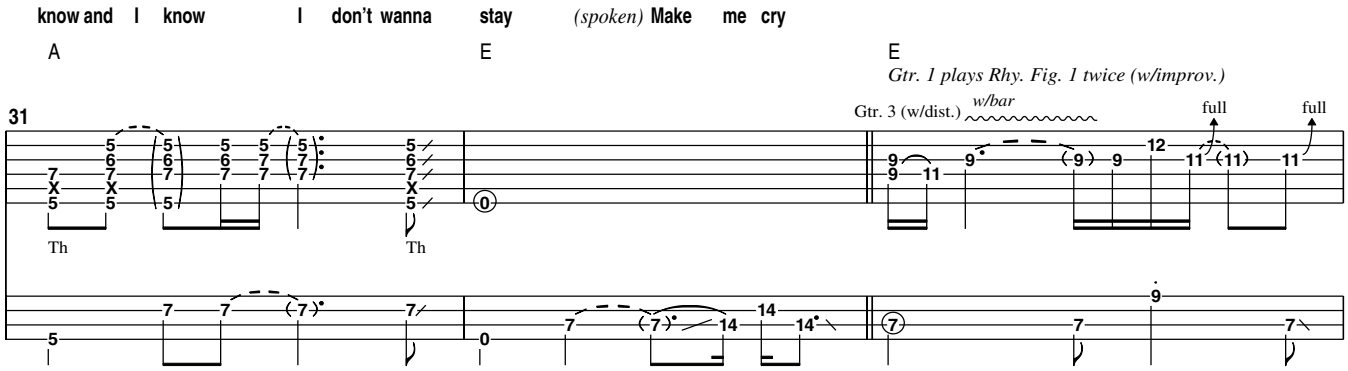


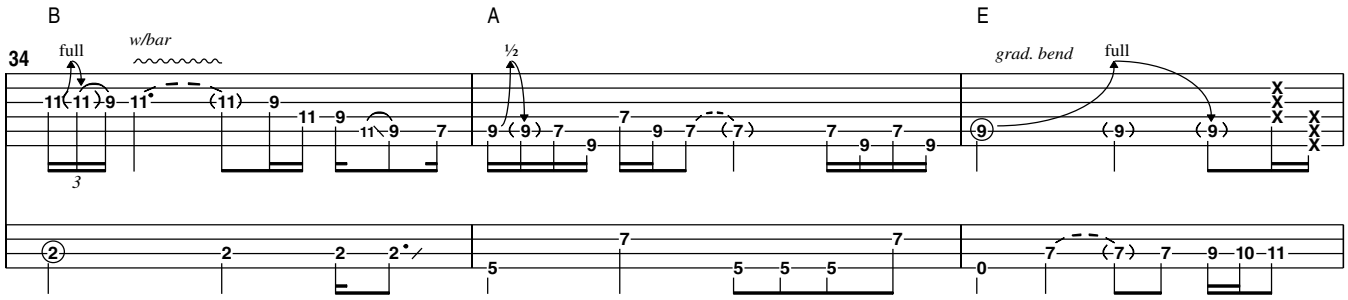
C **1st Chorus** (1:22)

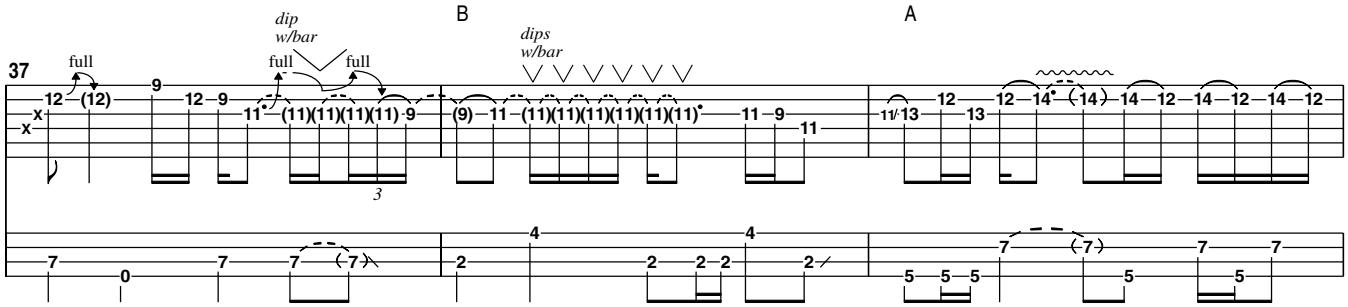


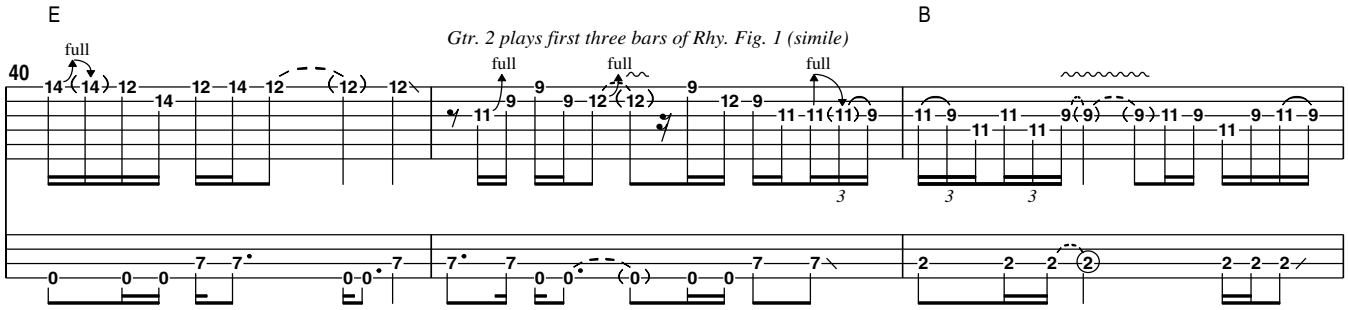


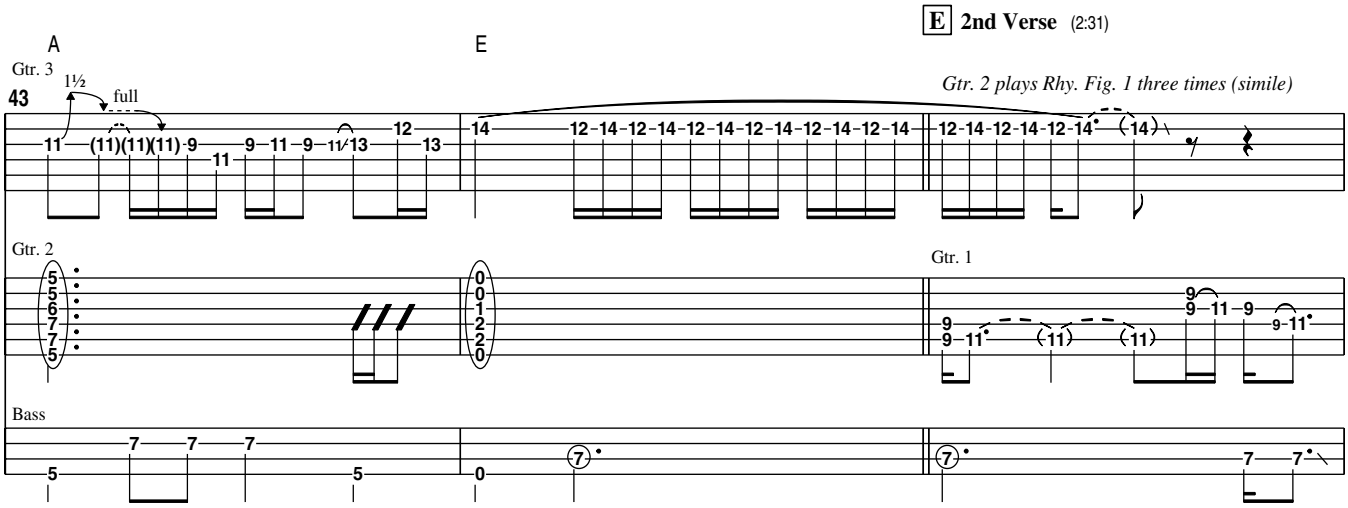
D Guitar Solo (1:49)

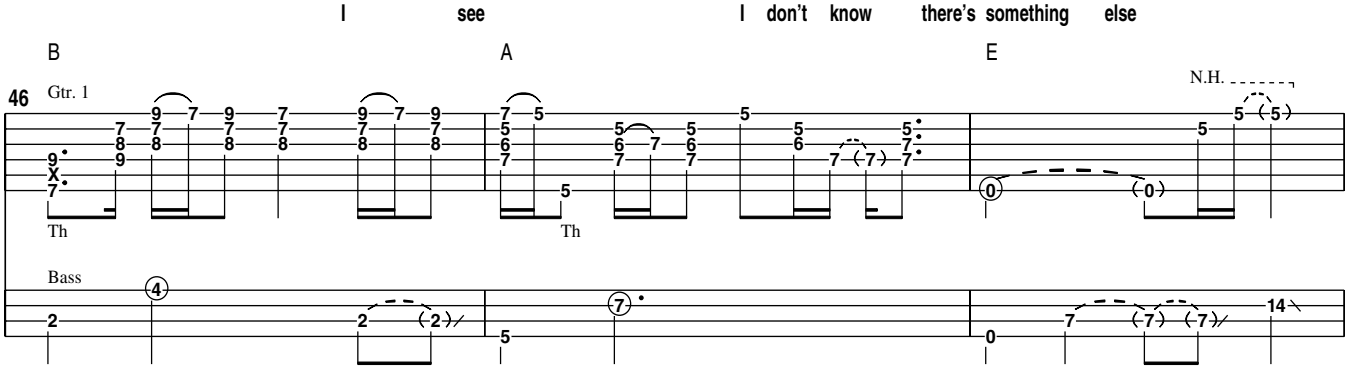


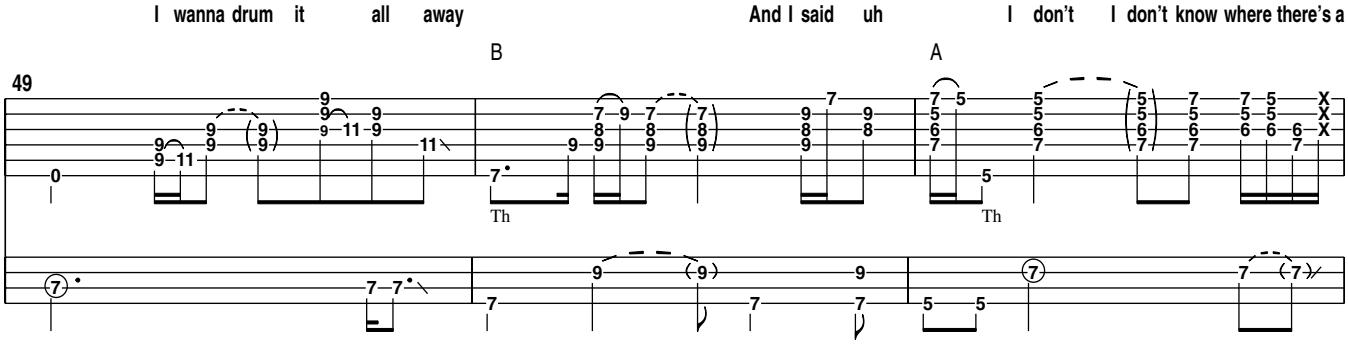


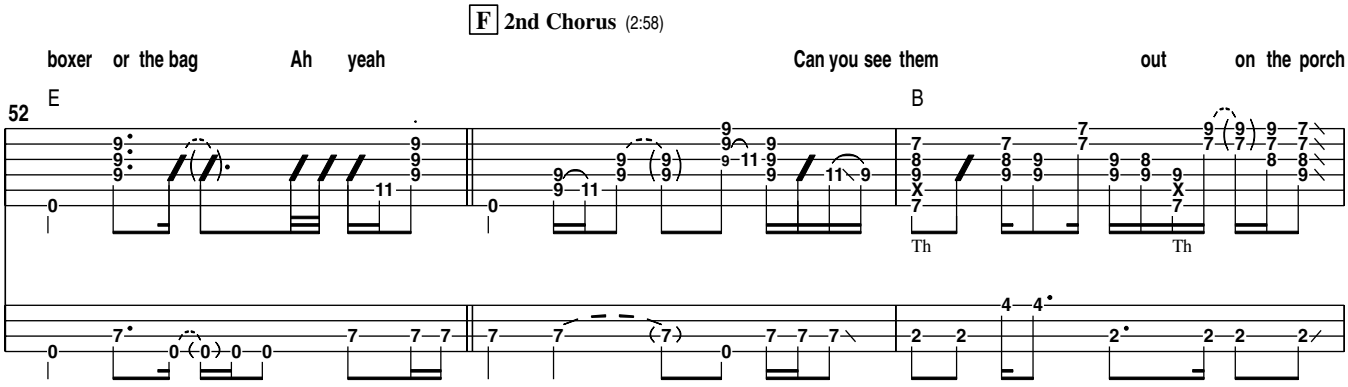


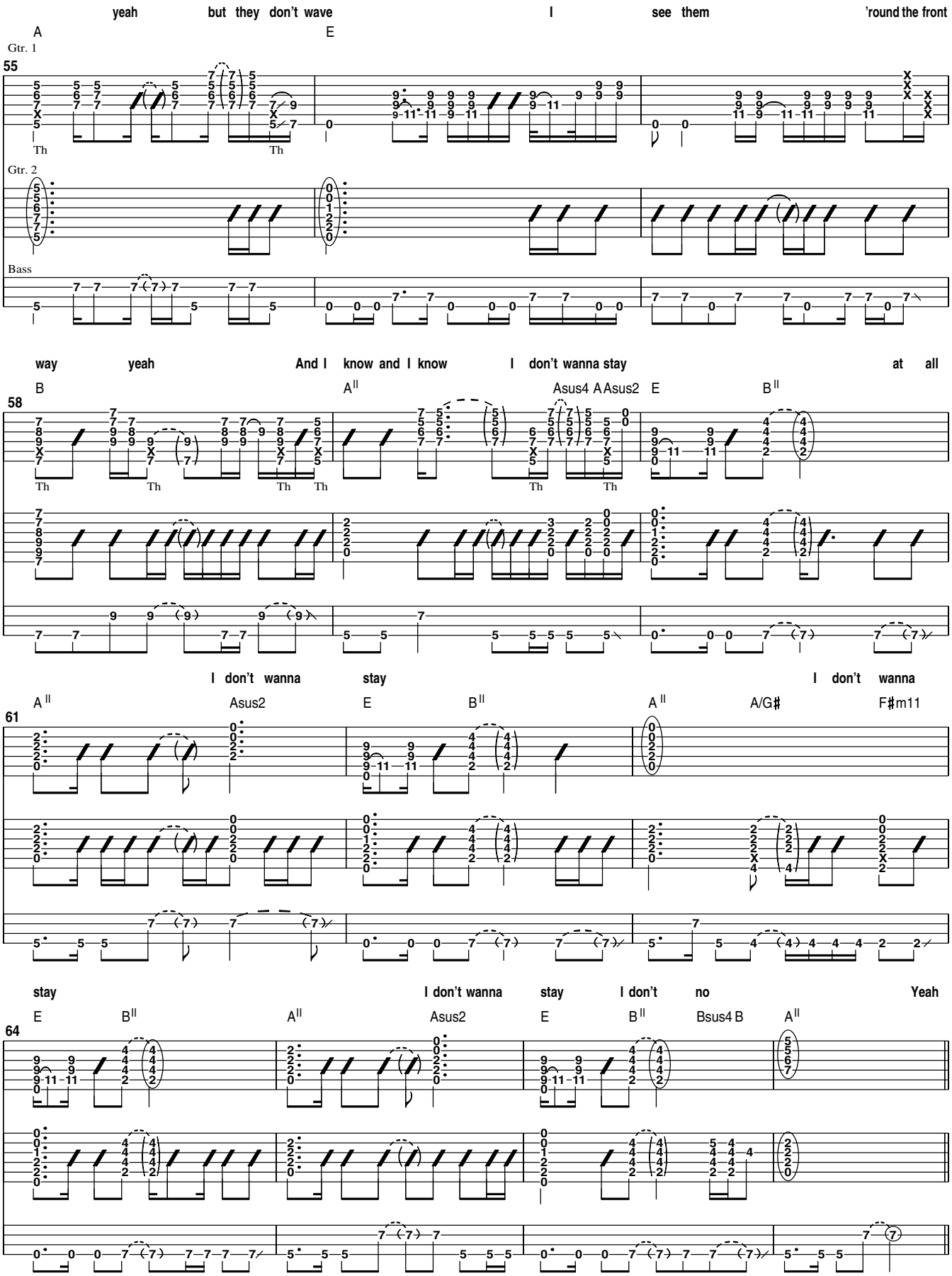



E 2nd Verse (2:31)
A
E
Gtr. 3
1½
full
43
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 three times (simile)
Gtr. 2
Gtr. 1
Bass

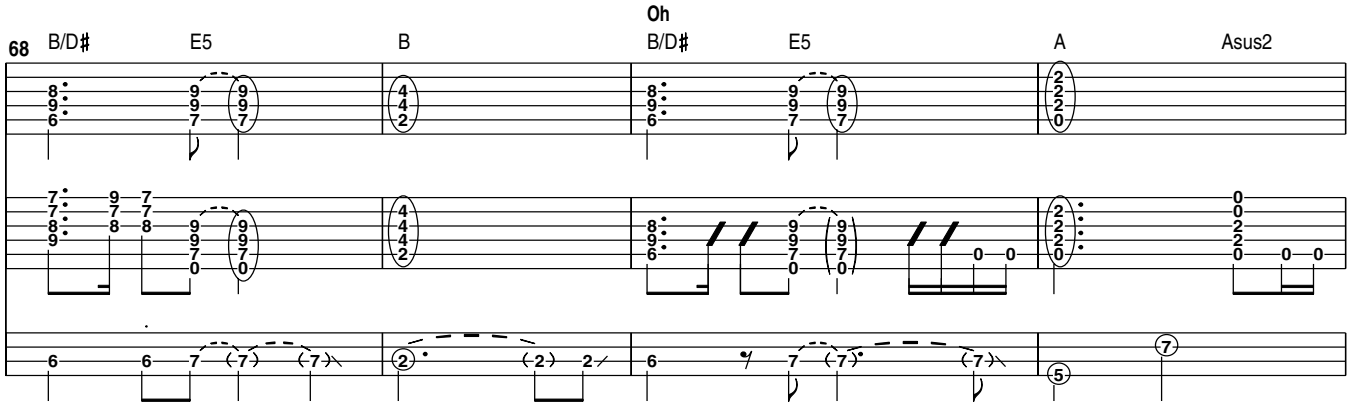

I see I don't know there's something else
B
A
E
46
Gtr. 1
N.H.
Th
Th
Bass

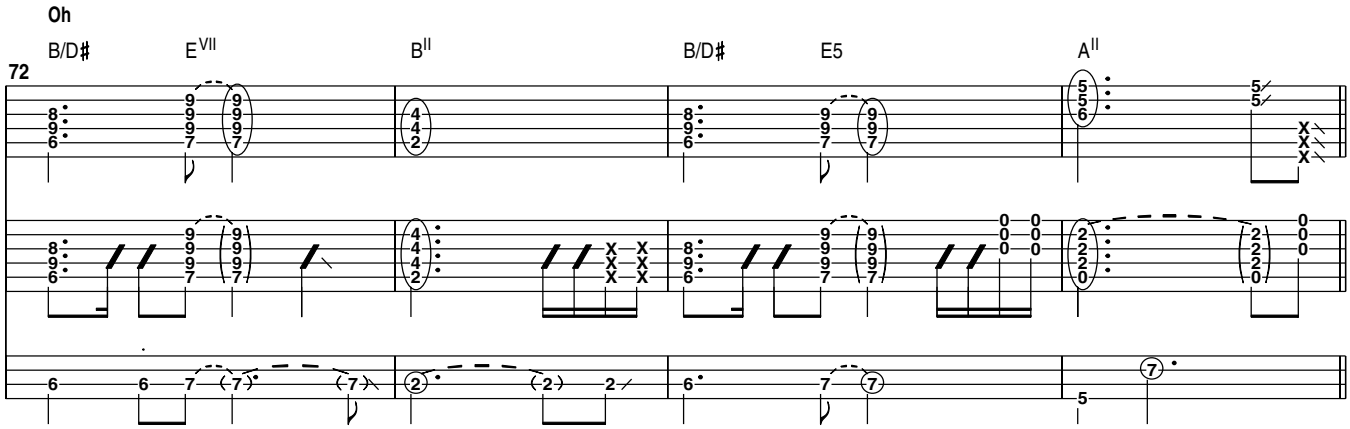

I wanna drum it all away And I said uh I don't I don't know where there's a
B
A
49
Th
Th


F 2nd Chorus (2:58)
boxer or the bag Ah yeah Can you see them out on the porch
E
B
52
Th
Th

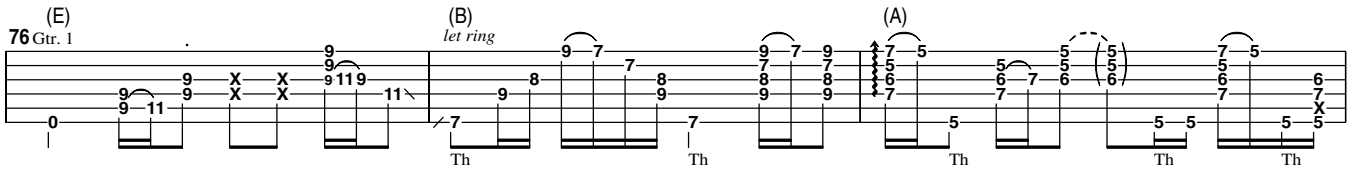

yeah but they don't wave I see them 'round the front
A E
Gtr. 1
55
Th Th
Gtr. 2
Bass
way yeah And I know and I know I don't wanna stay at all
B A II Asus4 A Asus2 E B II
58
Th Th Th Th Th Th
I don't wanna stay I don't wanna
A II Asus2 E B II A II A/G# F#m11
61
stay I don't wanna stay I don't no Yeah
E B II A II Asus2 E B II Bsus4 B A II
64

G **Interlude** (3:49)

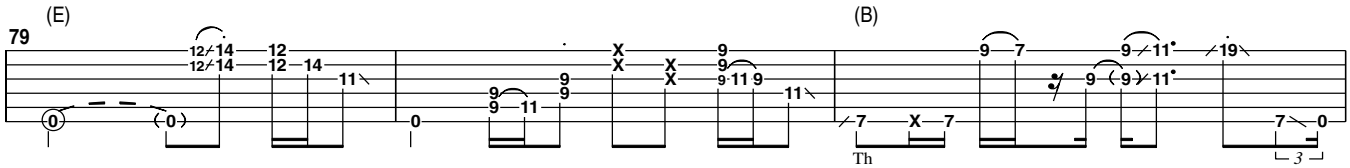


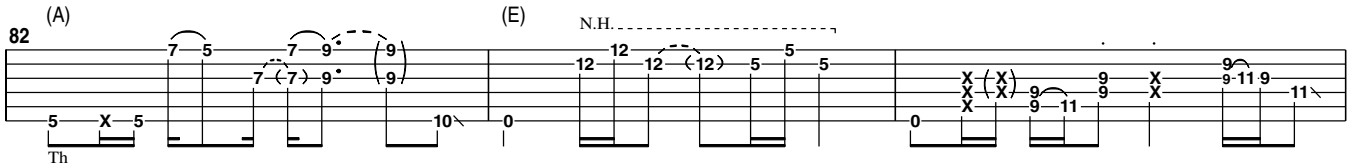


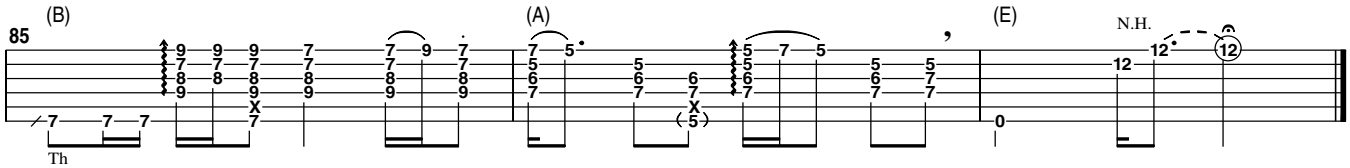
H **Outro** (4:17)



(Bass picks open low E note and lets it ring for six beaults)





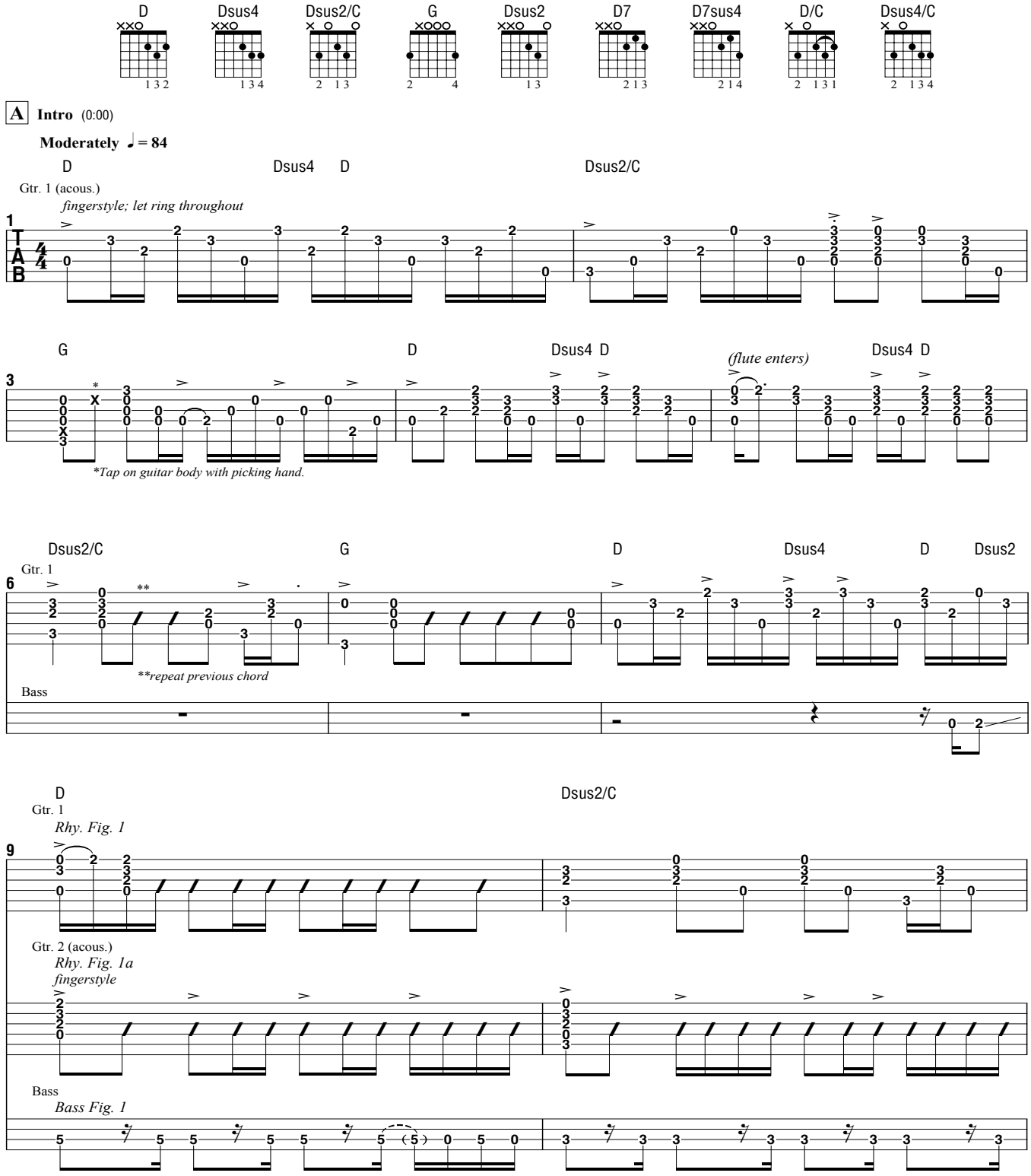


CAN'T YOU SEE

The Marshall Tucker Band

As heard on **THE MARSHALL TUCKER BAND**

Words and music by **TOY CALDWELL** • *Transcribed by* **DAVE WHITEHALL** *and* **JEFF PERRIN**



"CAN'T YOU SEE"
WORDS AND MUSIC BY TOY CALDWELL
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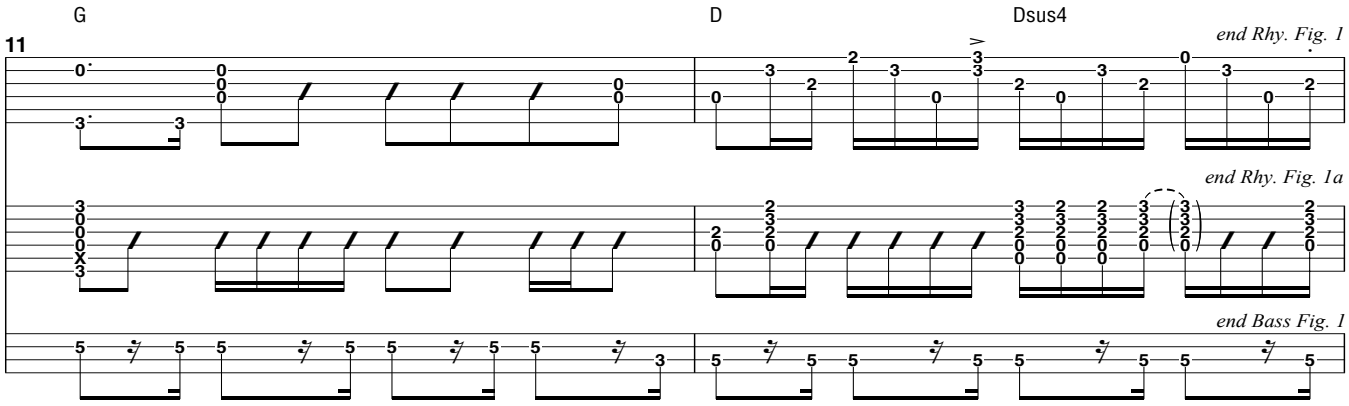
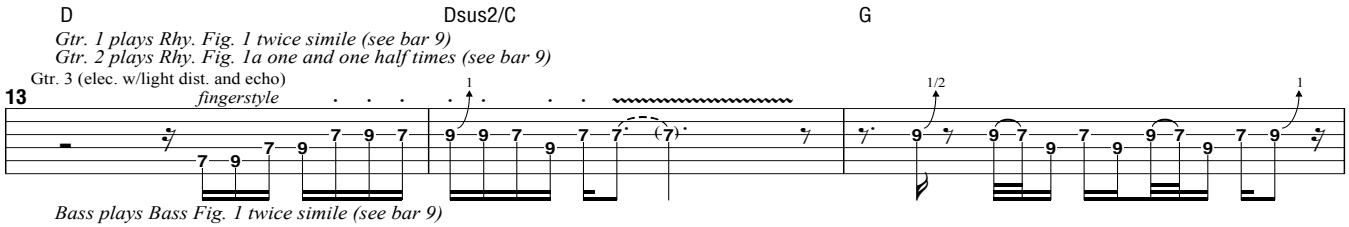
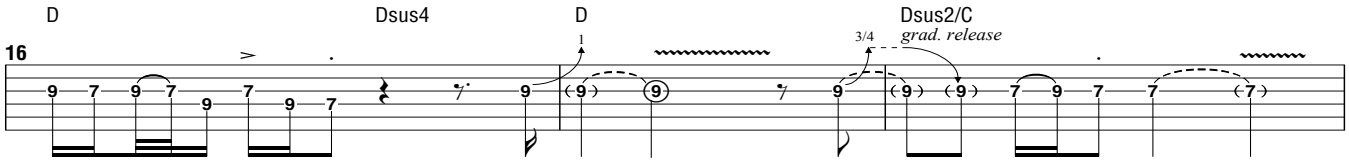
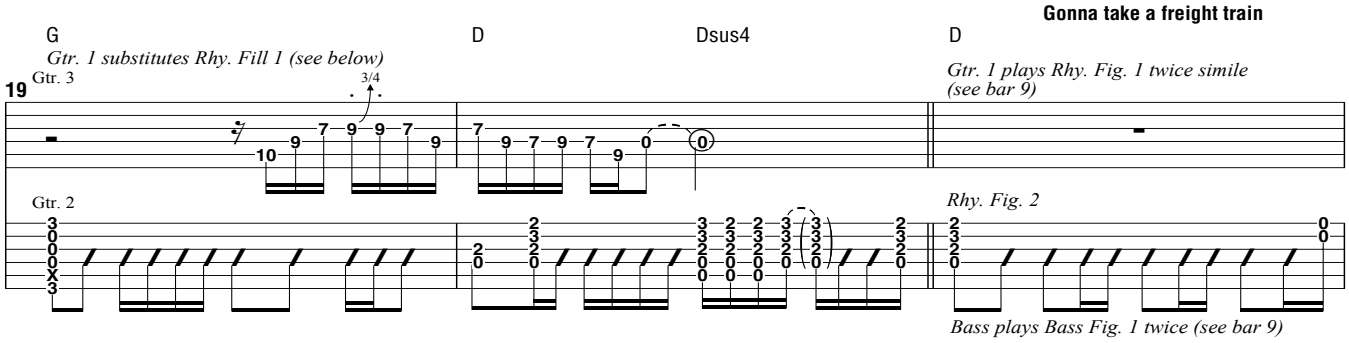
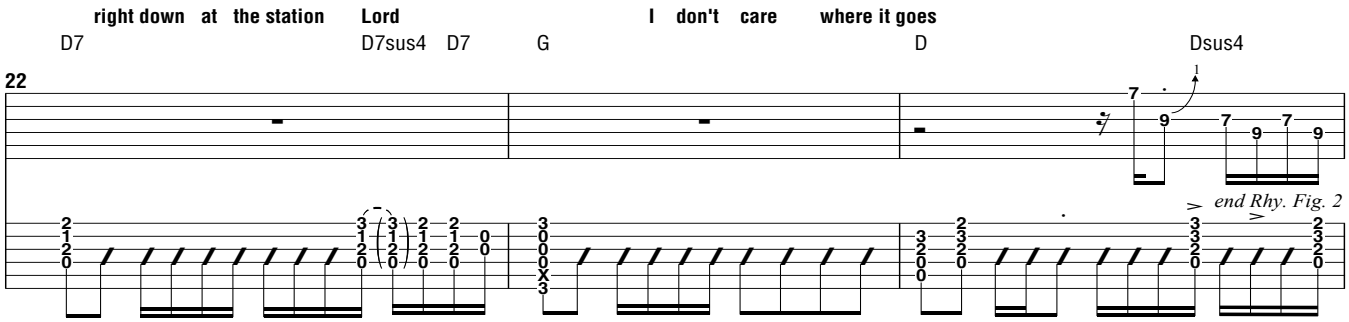
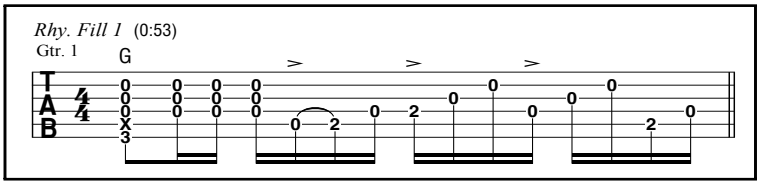

G
D
Dsus4
11
end Rhy. Fig. 1
end Rhy. Fig. 1a
end Bass Fig. 1


D
Dsus2/C
G
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a one and one half times (see bar 9)
Gtr. 3 (elec. w/light dist. and echo)
fingerstyle
13
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)


D
Dsus4
D
Dsus2/C
16
grad. release


B 1st Verse (0:59)
Gonna take a freight train
G
D
Dsus4
D
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 1 (see below)
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 3
19
Gtr. 2
Rhy. Fig. 2
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 9)


right down at the station Lord
I don't care where it goes
D7
D7sus4
D7
G
D
Dsus4
22
end Rhy. Fig. 2


Rhy. Fill 1 (0:53)
Gtr. 1
G

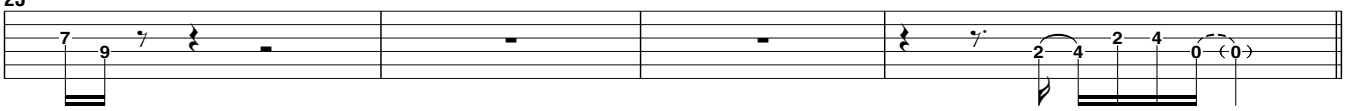
Gonna climb a mountain the highest mountain I jump off nobody gonna know Can't you see

D D7 G D Dsus4

Gtr. 2 repeats Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 21)

Gtr. 3

25



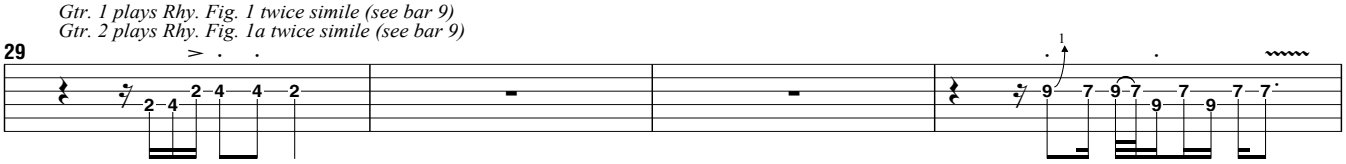
C **1st Chorus** (1:23)

whoa can't you see what that woman Lord she been doin' to me Can't you see

D Dsus2/C G D Dsus4

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a twice simile (see bar 9)

29



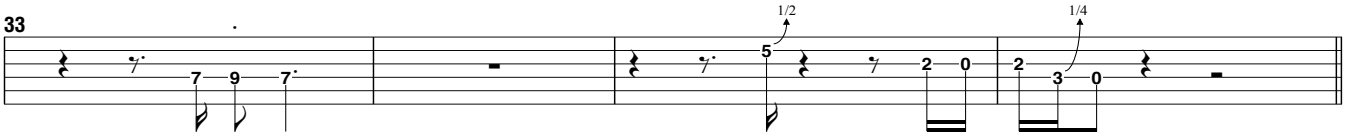
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 9)

can't you see what that woman she been doin' to me

D Dsus2/C G D Dsus4

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 2 (see below)

33



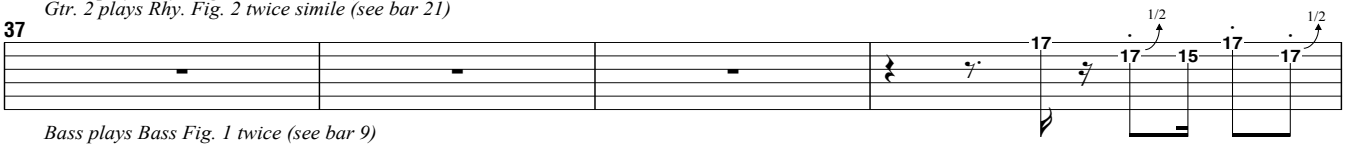
D **2nd Verse** (1:46)

I'm gonna find me a hole in the wall I'm gonna crawl inside and die

D D7 G D Dsus4

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice simile (see bar 21)

37

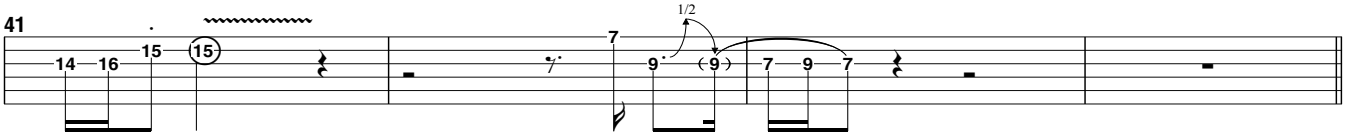


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 9)

Come later now a mean old woman Lord never told me goodbye Can't you see

D D7 G D

41



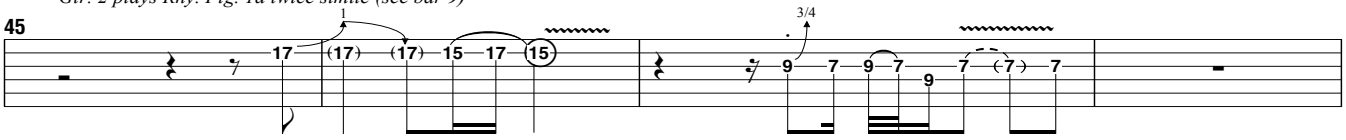
E **2nd Chorus** (2:10)

oh can't you see what that woman Lord she been doin' to me Can't you see

D Dsus2/C G D

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a twice simile (see bar 9)

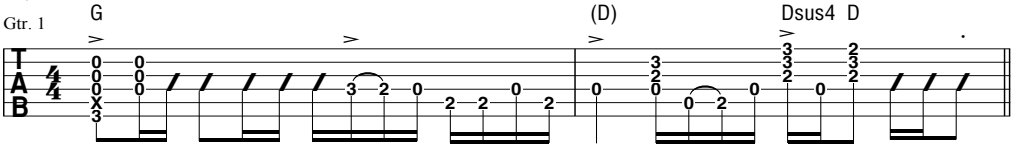
45

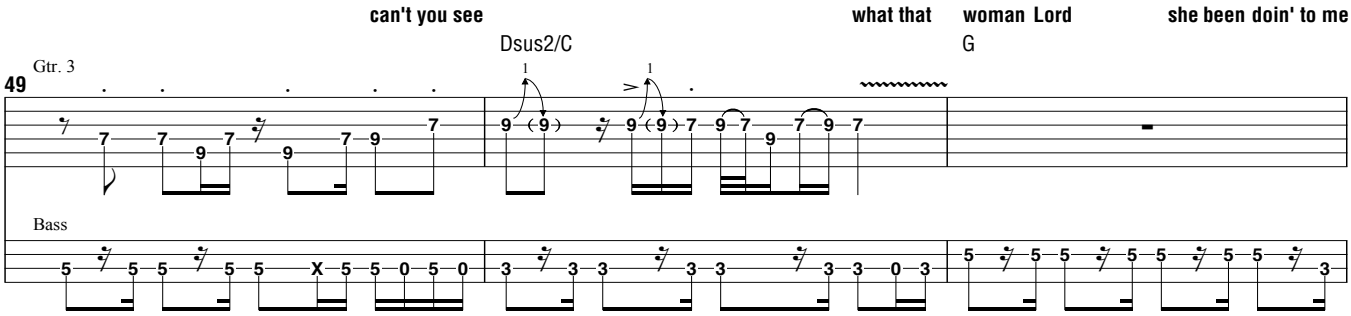


Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 (see bar 9)

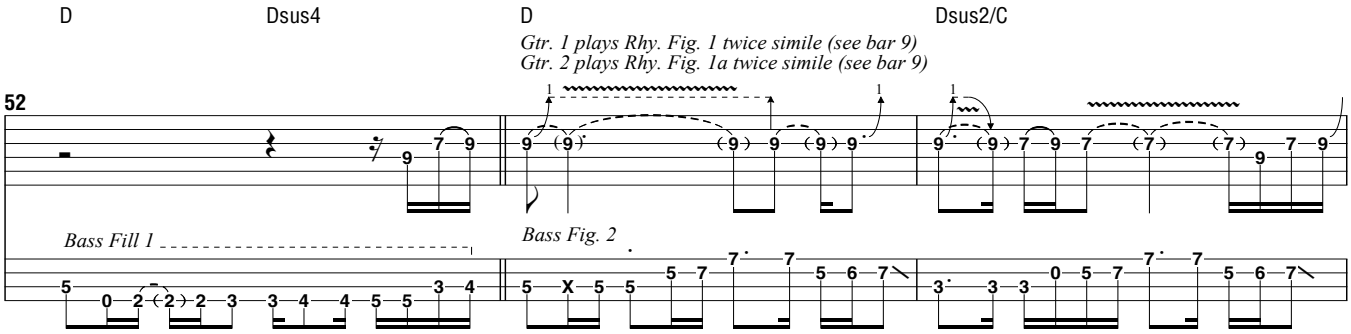
Rhy. Fill 2 (1:40)

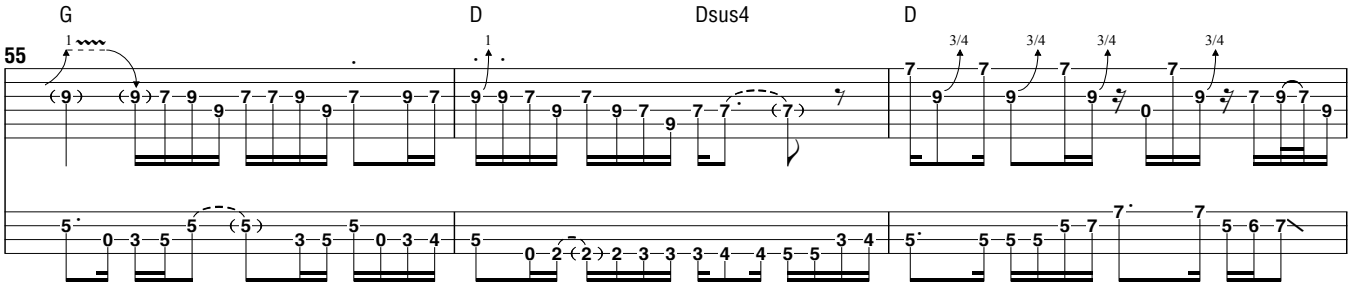
Gtr. 1 G (D) Dsus4 D

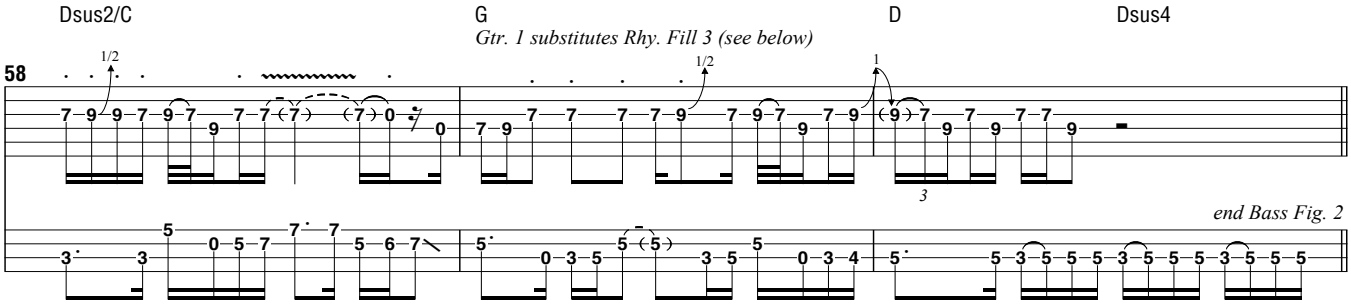


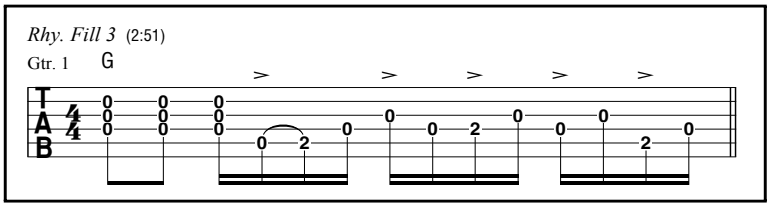


F **1st Guitar Solo** (2:33)









G **3rd Verse** (2:56)

I'm gonna buy a ticket now as far as I can Ain't-a never comin' back

D D7 D7sus4 D7 G D

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 2 twice simile (see bar 21)

Gtr. 3

61

grad. release

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)

Grab me a southbound all the way to Georgia now 'til the train it run out of track Can't you see

D7 G D

65

H **3rd Chorus** (3:20)

whoa can't you see what that woman Lord she been doin' to me Can't you see

D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C G D Dsus4 D

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a twice simile (see bar 9)

Gtr. 3

69

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 3 *end Rhy. Fig. 3*

Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice simile (see bar 9)

can't you see what that woman she been doin' to me (oh Lord)

Dsus4 D Dsus2/C G D Dsus4 D

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 simile (see bar 9)

Gtr. 3

73

Bass substitutes Bass Fill 1 simile (see bar 52)

I **2nd Guitar Solo** (3:44)

Dsus4 D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a twice simile (see bar 9)

Gtr. 3

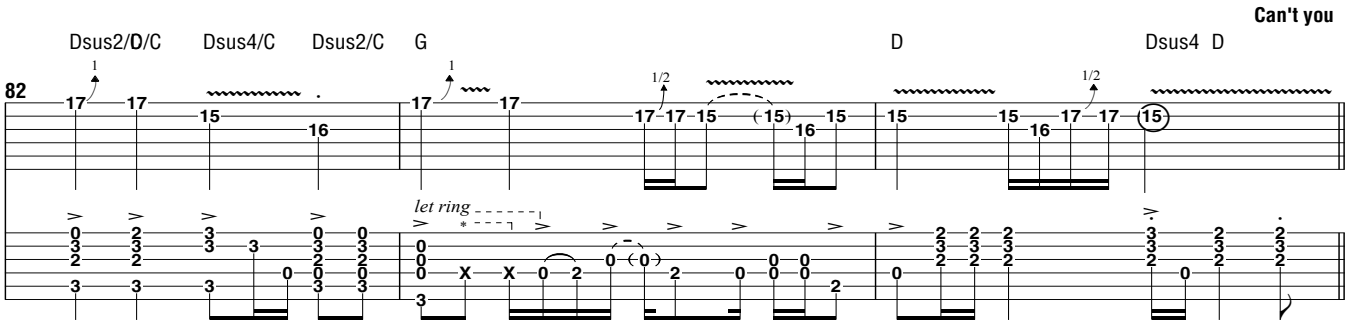
77

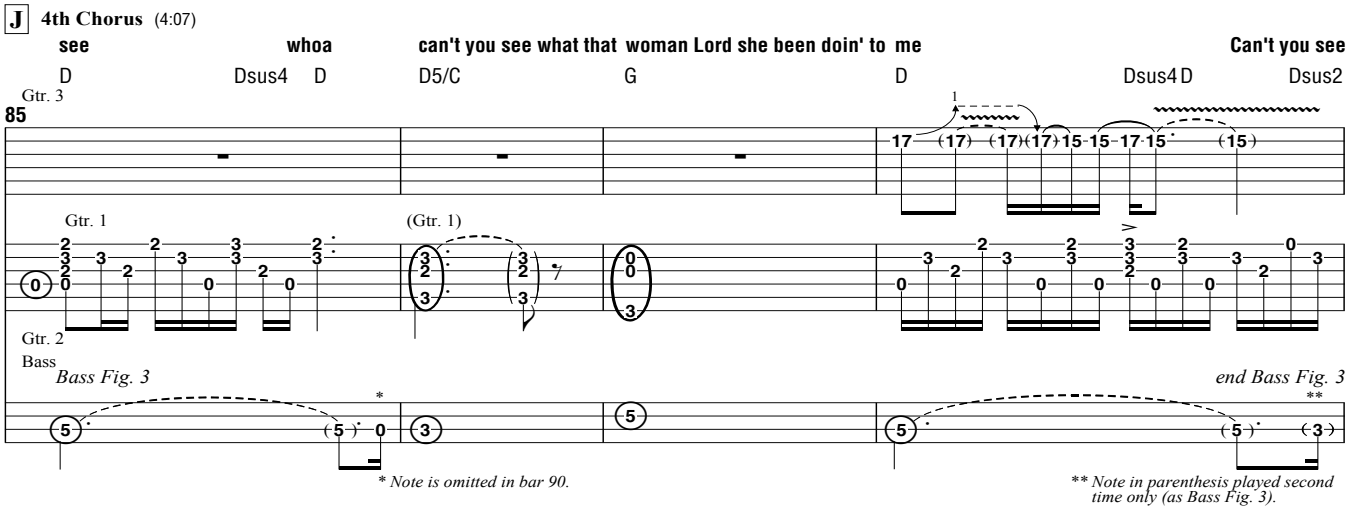
Gtr. 1

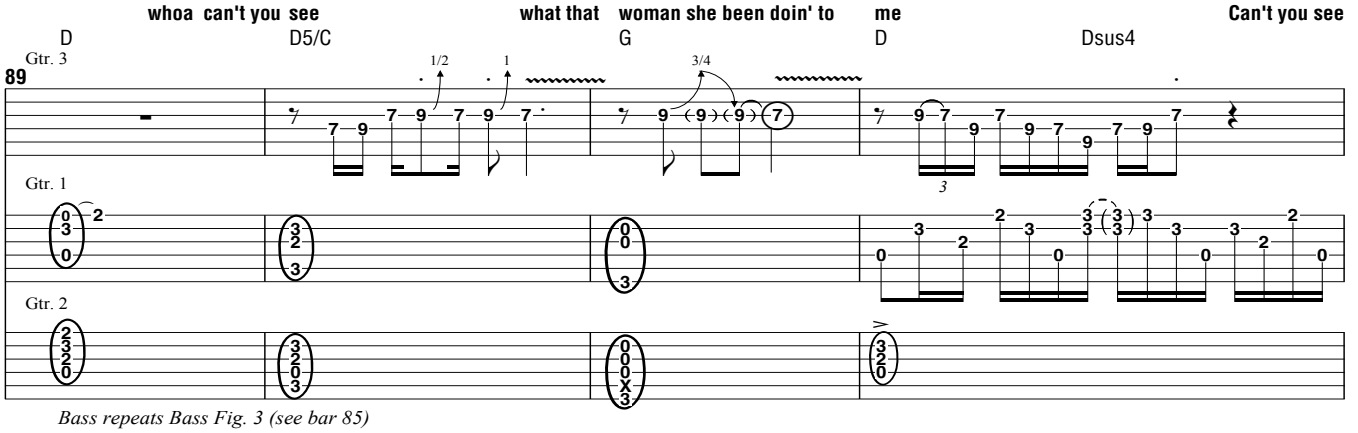
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 simile (see bar 53)

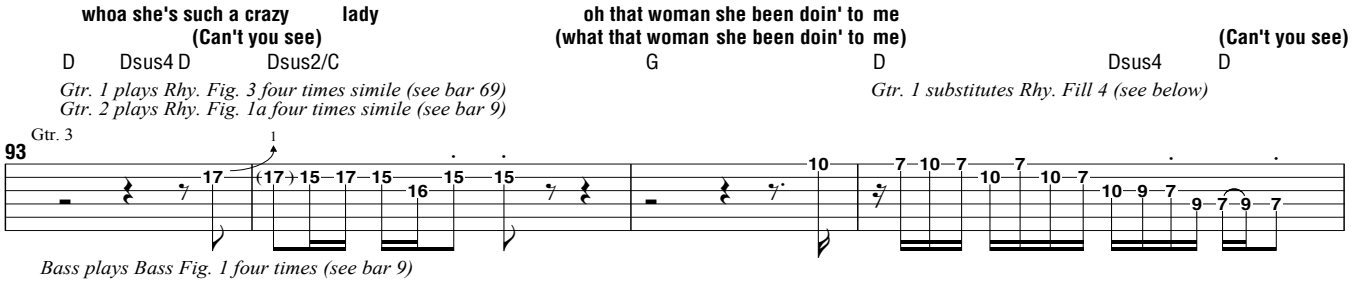
G D Dsus4 D Dsus4 D Dsus2 D

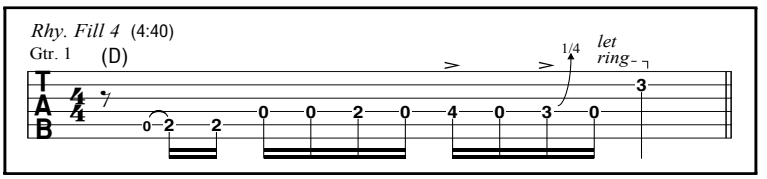
79


Can't you
Dsus2/D/C Dsus4/C Dsus2/C G D Dsus4 D
82
let ring
* Tap on guitar body with picking hand.


J 4th Chorus (4:07)
see whoa can't you see what that woman Lord she been doin' to me Can't you see
D Dsus4 D D5/C G D Dsus4 D Dsus2
Gtr. 3
85
Gtr. 1
(Gtr. 1)
Gtr. 2
Bass
Bass Fig. 3
end Bass Fig. 3
* Note is omitted in bar 90.
** Note in parenthesis played second time only (as Bass Fig. 3).


whoa can't you see what that woman she been doin' to me Can't you see
D D5/C G D Dsus4
Gtr. 3
89
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
Bass repeats Bass Fig. 3 (see bar 85)


whoa she's such a crazy lady
(Can't you see)
D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C
oh that woman she been doin' to me
(what that woman she been doin' to me)
G D Dsus4 D
(Can't you see)
Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 3 four times simile (see bar 69)
Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a four times simile (see bar 9)
Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 4 (see below)
Gtr. 3
93
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 four times (see bar 9)


Rhy. Fill 4 (4:40)
Gtr. 1 (D)
let ring

Lord I can't stand it no more (Can't you see) oh (what that woman) she been doin' to me (she been doin' to me)

D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C G

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 5 (see below)

97

I'm gonna take a freight train (Can't you see) right down at the station (can't you see) Lord (what that

D Dsus4 D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C

100

Bass substitutes Bass Fill 2 (see below)

Ain't never comin' back whoa Lord woman) (she been doin' to me) (Can't you see) Gonna ride me a southbound (can't you see)

G D Dsus4 D Dsus4 D

103

Bass substitutes Bass Fill 2 (see below)

all the way to Georgia Lord (what that woman) 'til the train it run outta track (she been doin' to me) oh Lord

Dsus2/C G D Dsus4 D

Gtr. 1 substitutes Rhy. Fill 6 (see below)

106

K **3rd Guitar Solo** (5:17)

Dsus4 D Dsus4 D Dsus2/C G

Gtr. 2 plays Rhy. Fig. 1a one and a half times simile (see bar 9)

Gtr. 3

109

Gtr. 1

Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 simile (see bar 53)

Rhy. Fill 5 (4:49)

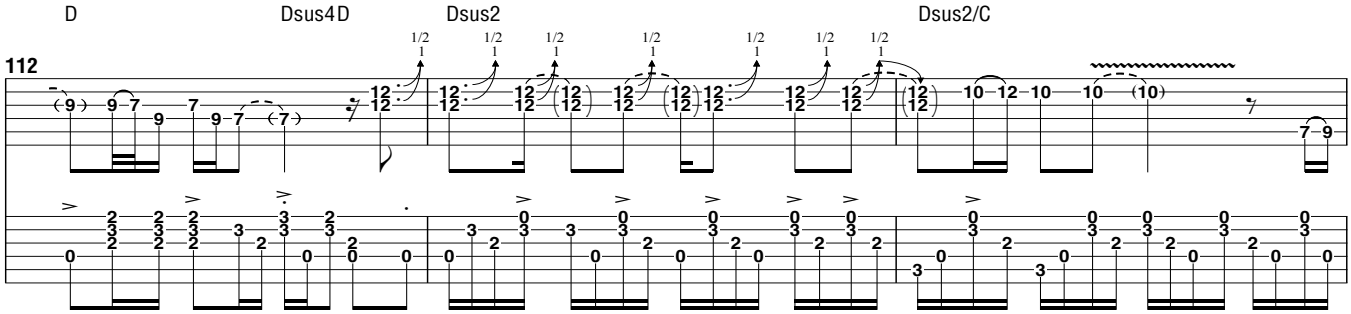
Gtr. 1

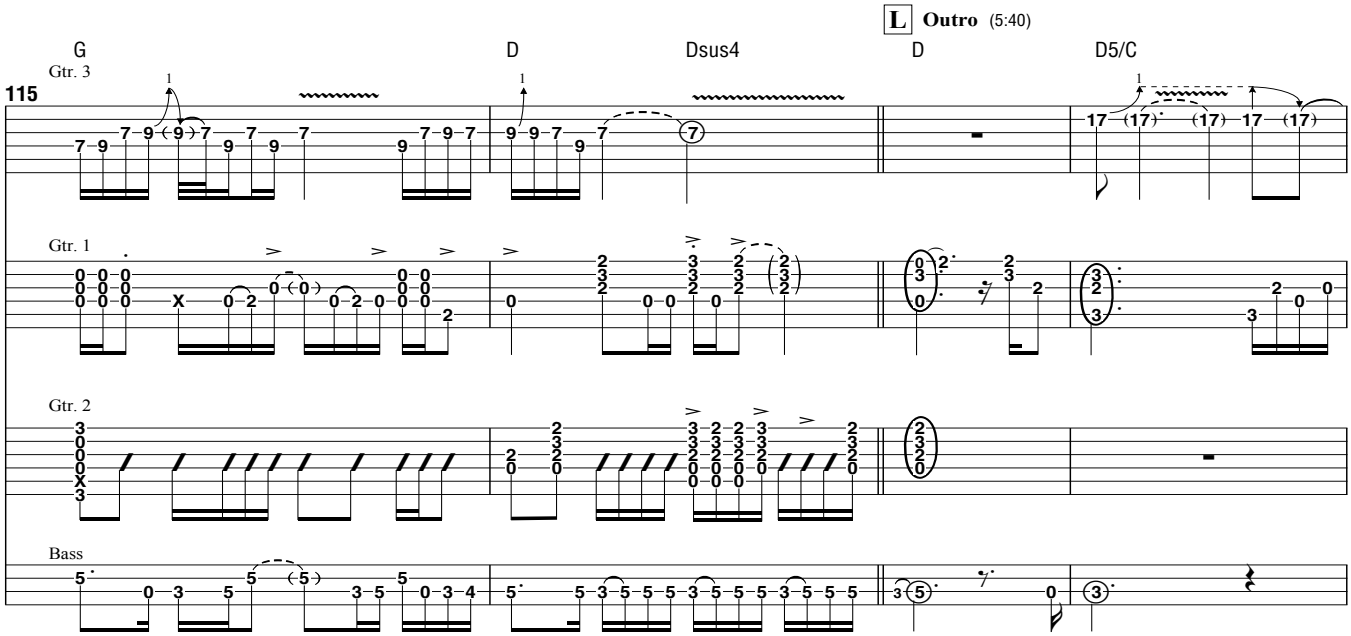
Rhy. Fill 6 (5:12)

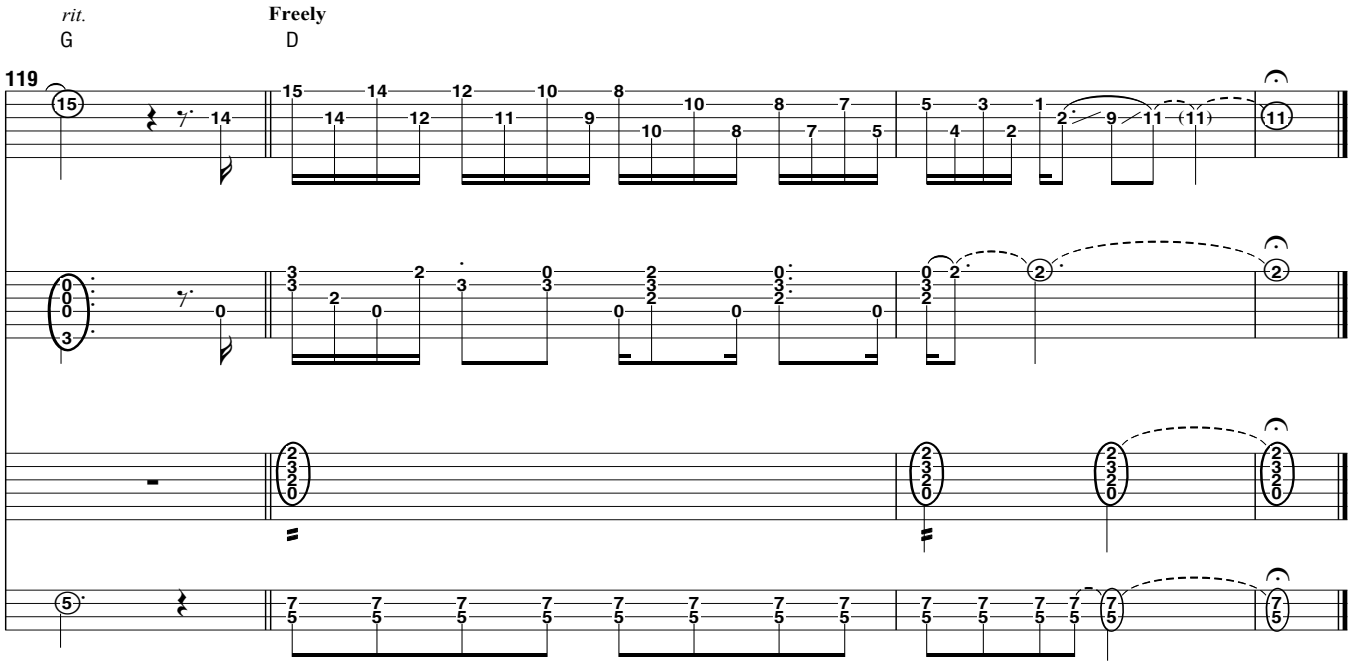
Gtr. 1 G

Bass Fill 2 (4:52, 5:03)

(D)


D
Dsus4D
Dsus2
Dsus2/C
112


L Outro (5:40)
G
D
Dsus4
D
D5/C
Gtr. 3
115
Gtr. 1
Gtr. 2
Bass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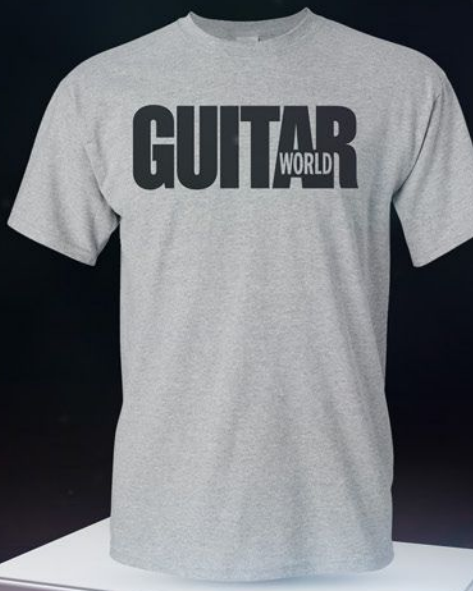

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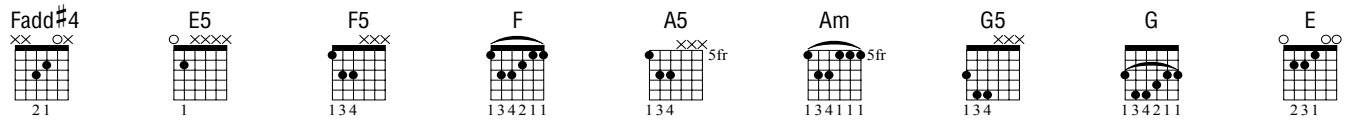
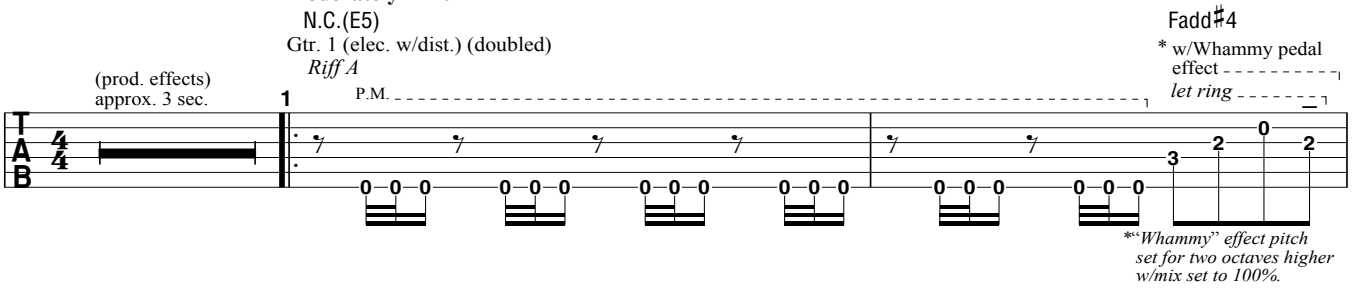
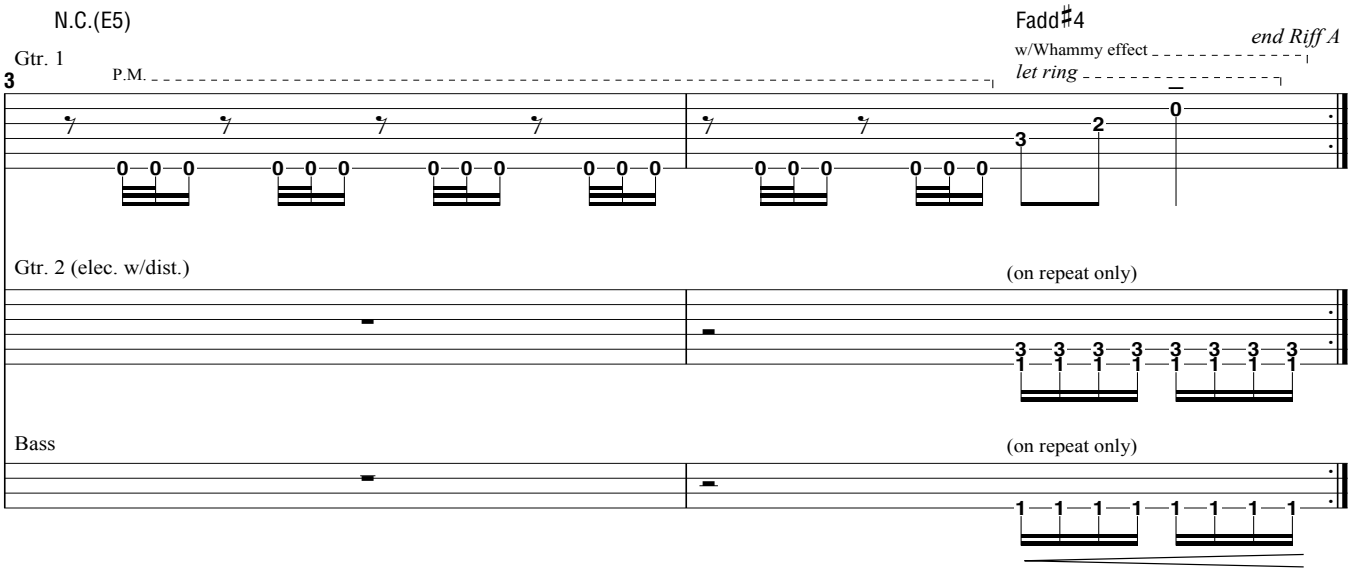
Bass tuning, low to high: D G C F.
All music sounds in the key of D minor, one whole step lower than written.

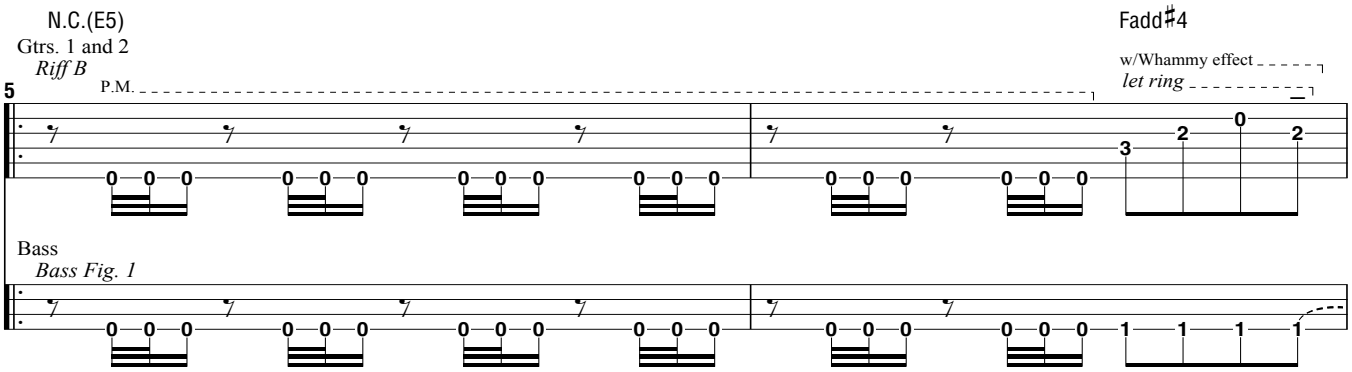


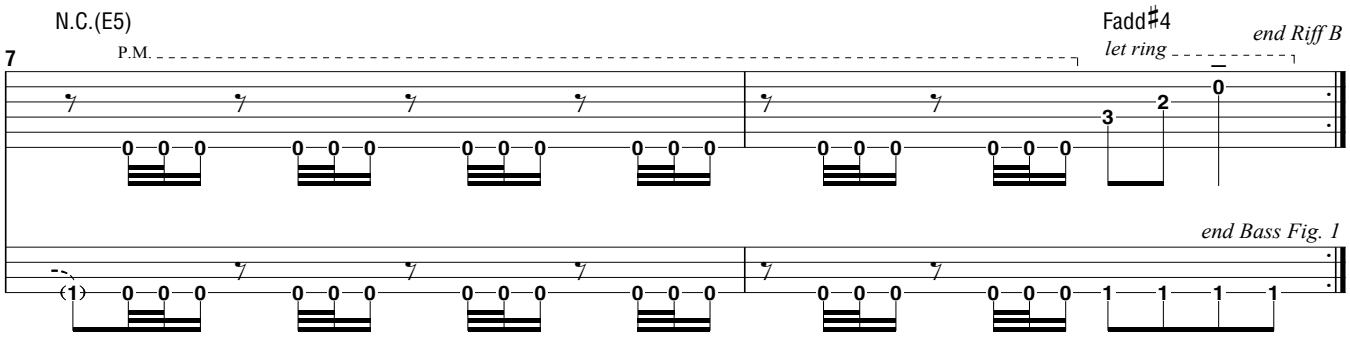
A **Intro** (0:03)

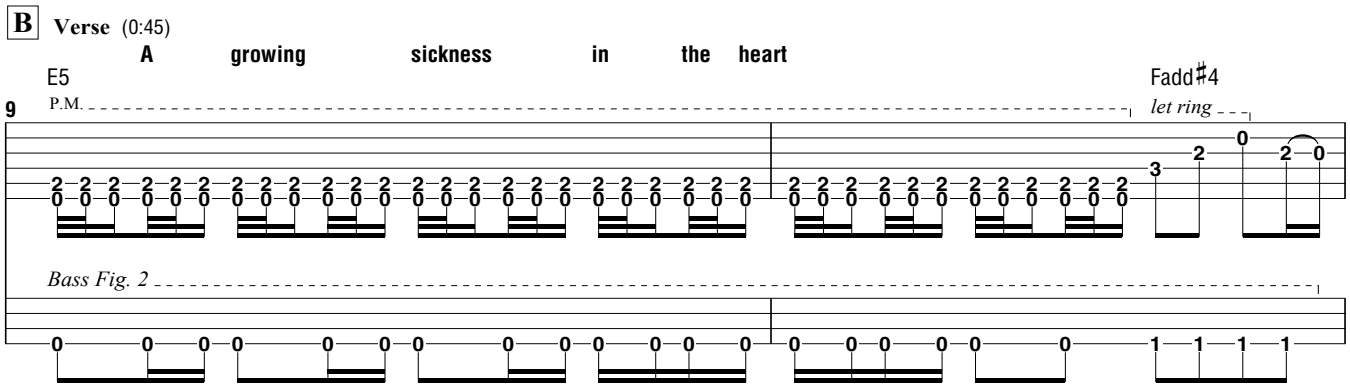
Moderately ♩ = 92

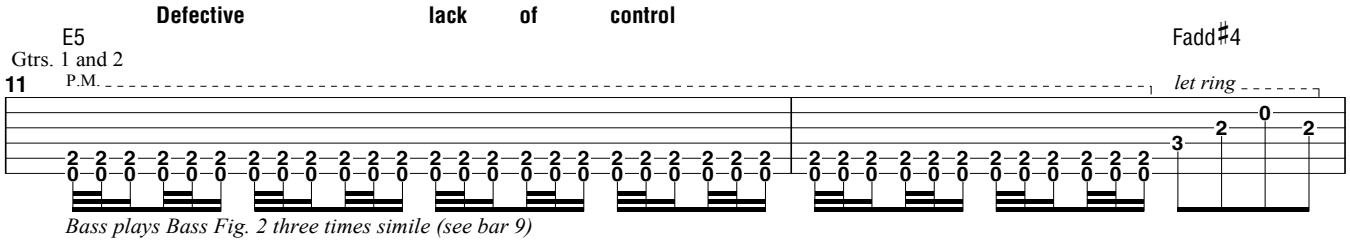


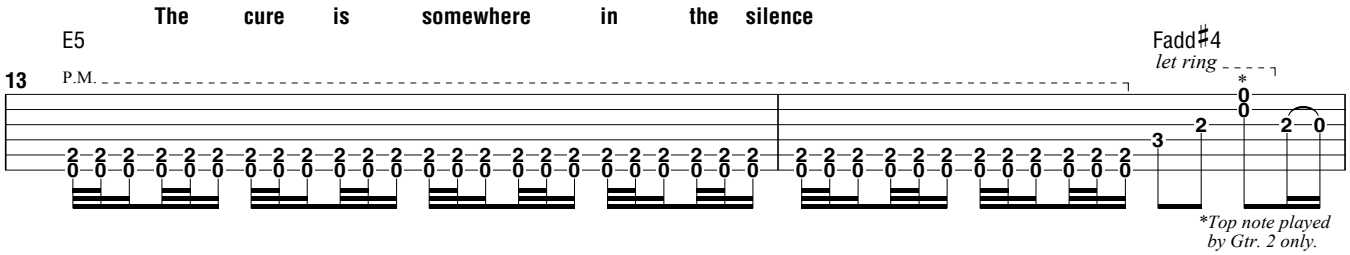


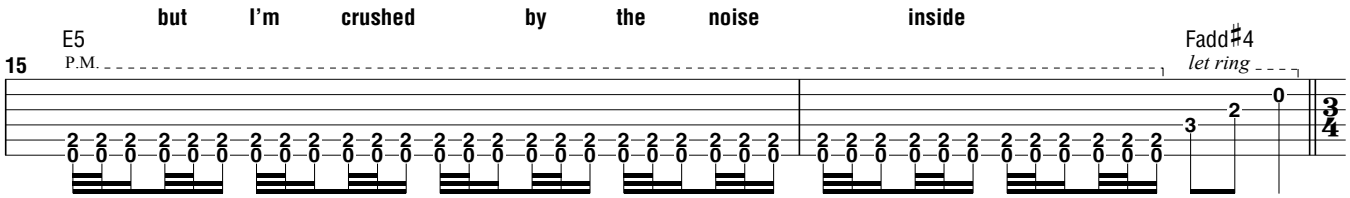



N.C.(E5)
Fadd♯4
end Riff B
7
P.M.
let ring
end Bass Fig. 1


B Verse (0:45)
A growing sickness in the heart
E5
Fadd♯4
9
P.M.
let ring
Bass Fig. 2


Defective lack of control
E5
Fadd♯4
Gtrs. 1 and 2
11
P.M.
let ring
Bass plays Bass Fig. 2 three times simile (see bar 9)


The cure is somewhere in the silence
E5
Fadd♯4
13
P.M.
let ring
*Top note played by Gtr. 2 only.


but I'm crushed by the noise inside
E5
Fadd♯4
15
P.M.
let ring

C (1:06)

F5 A5 G5 E5 F5 A5 G5 E5

Gtr. 2 (doubled throughout)

17 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. *(repeat previous two bars)* 2

F5 F A5 Am G5 G E5 E F5 F A5 Am G5 G E5 E

Gtr. 1

Rhy. Fig. 1

w/flanger effect

P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. 2 (flanger effect off)

Bass

Bass Fig. 3 2

D **Chorus** (1:14, 1:50, 2:52)

(1.) Don't lock the door on me You'd kill me face down dead
(2., 3.) Don't lock the door on me You'd kill me face down dead
Please hear me out You'd kill me face down dead

F5 A5 G5 E5 F5 A5 G5 E5

Gtr. 1 plays Rhy. Fig. 1 twice (see bar 17)

Gtr. 2

21 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. 2

Bass plays Bass Fig. 3 twice (see bar 17)

2nd time on 2nd Chorus, skip ahead to F *(bar 37)*

2nd time on 3rd Chorus, skip ahead to H *(bar 49)*

Another part of me falls for you
Another point of view gone to waste
Another day in the dark

F5 A5 G5 E5 E5 E5 (omit repeat on 1st Chorus)

Gtr. 2

25 P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. *(repeat previous bar)*

F5 F A5 Am G5 G E5 E E5 E E5 E E5 E E5 E

Gtr. 1

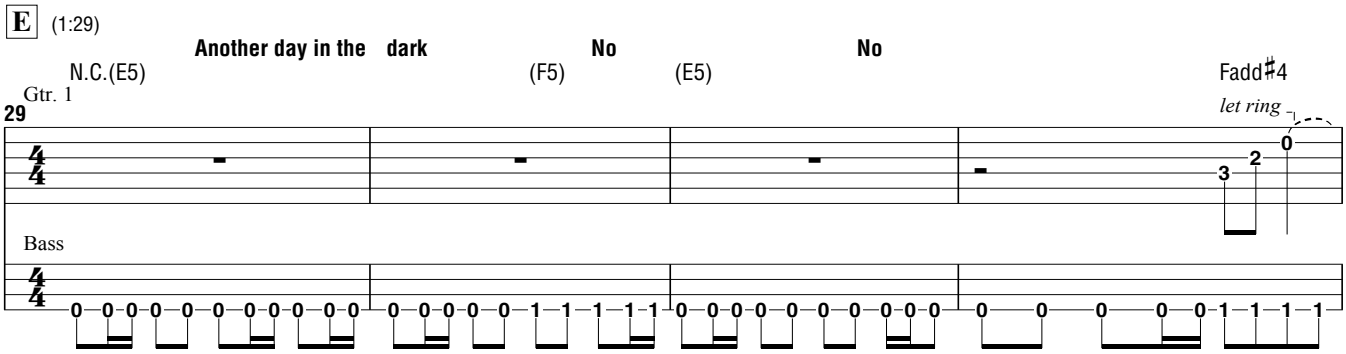
P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M. P.M.

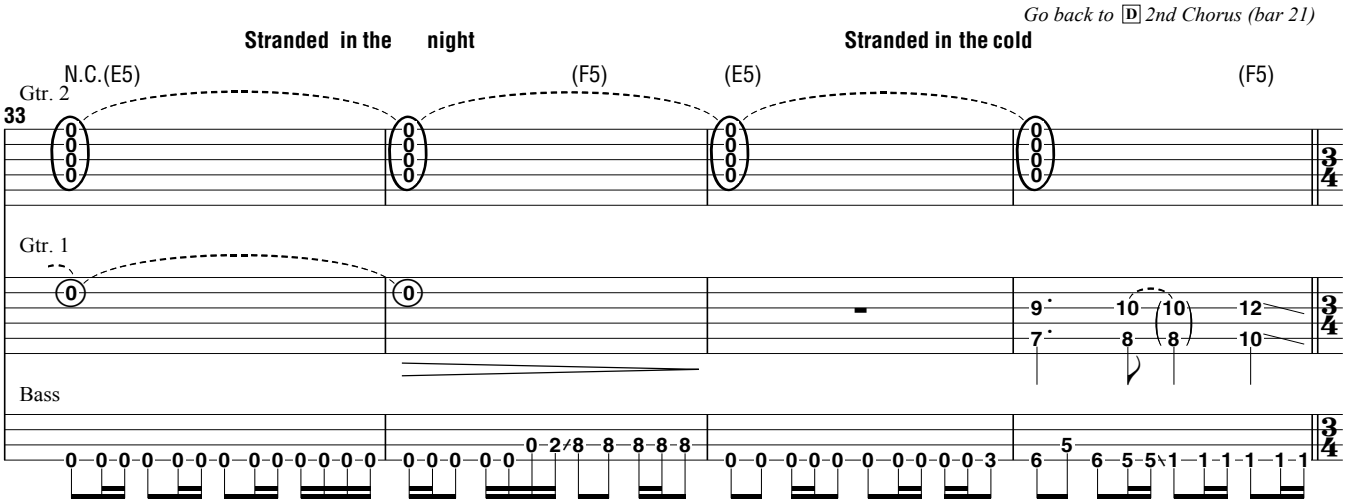
Bass

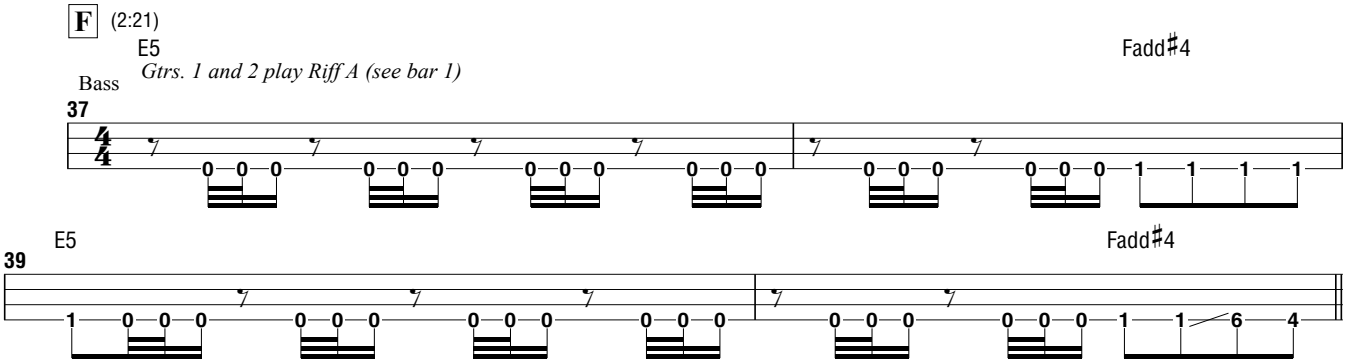
Substitute Bass Fill 1 first time on 3rd Chorus (see below)

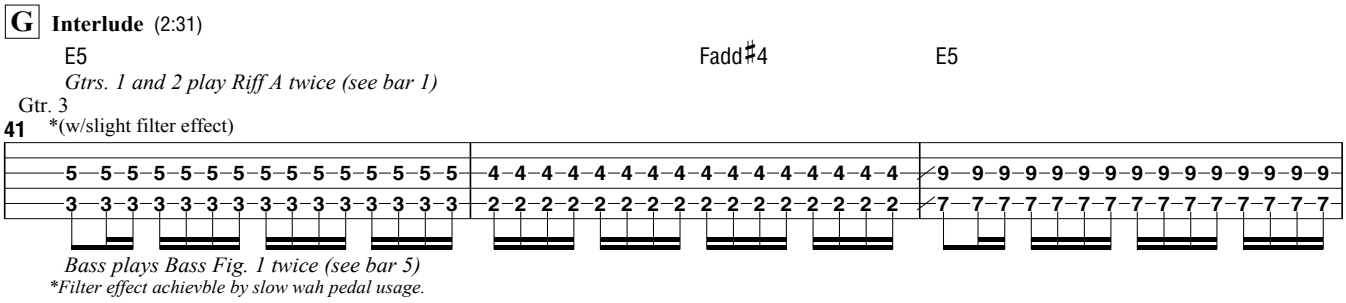
Bass Fill 1 (3:06)

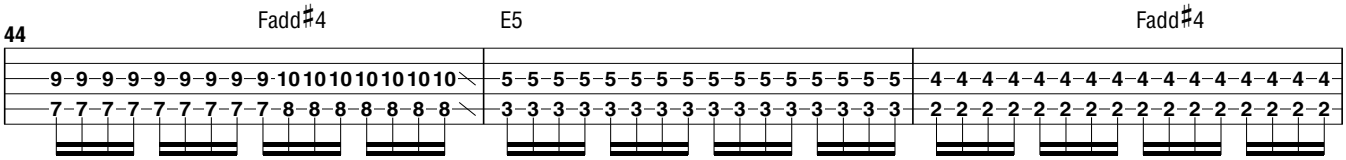
(E5) (E) (E5) (E)

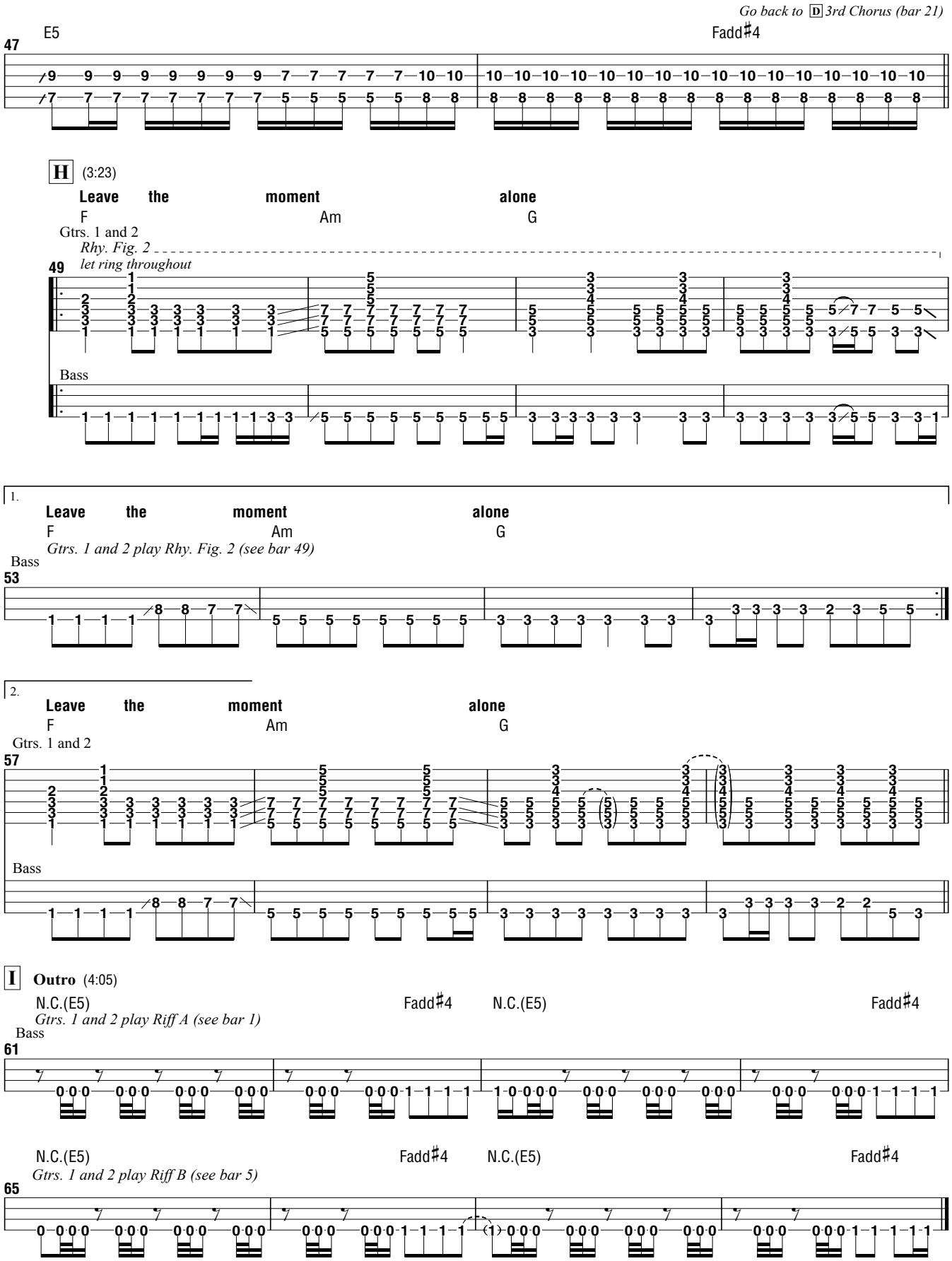

E (1:29)
Another day in the dark
No
No
N.C.(E5)
(F5)
(E5)
Fadd♯4
Gtr. 1
29
let ring
Bass


Go back to D 2nd Chorus (bar 21)
Stranded in the night
Stranded in the cold
N.C.(E5)
(F5)
(E5)
(F5)
Gtr. 2
33
Gtr. 1
Bass


F (2:21)
E5
Fadd♯4
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Riff A (see bar 1)
Bass
37
E5
Fadd♯4
39


G Interlude (2:31)
E5
Fadd♯4
E5
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Riff A twice (see bar 1)
Gtr. 3
41
*(w/slight filter effect)
Bass plays Bass Fig. 1 twice (see bar 5)
*Filter effect achievble by slow wah pedal usage.


44
Fadd♯4
E5
Fadd♯4


Go back to D 3rd Chorus (bar 21)
47
E5
Fadd♯4
H (3:23)
Leave the moment alone
F Am G
Gtrs. 1 and 2
Rhy. Fig. 2
let ring throughout
49
Bass
1.
Leave the moment alone
F Am G
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Rhy. Fig. 2 (see bar 49)
Bass
53
2.
Leave the moment alone
F Am G
Gtrs. 1 and 2
57
Bass
I Outro (4:05)
N.C.(E5) Fadd♯4 N.C.(E5) Fadd♯4
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Riff A (see bar 1)
Bass
61
N.C.(E5) Fadd♯4 N.C.(E5) Fadd♯4
Gtrs. 1 and 2 play Riff B (see bar 5)
65

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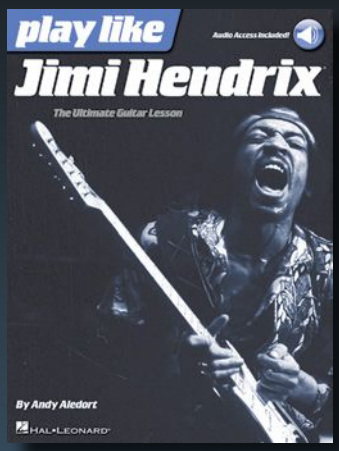

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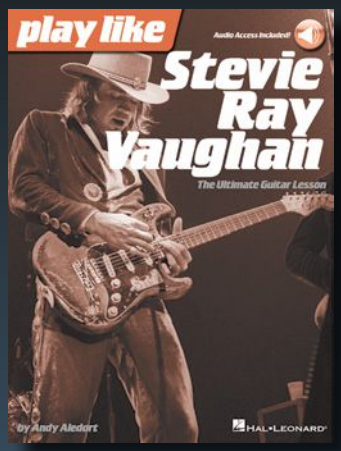

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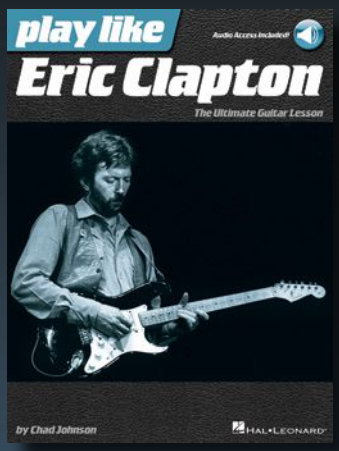

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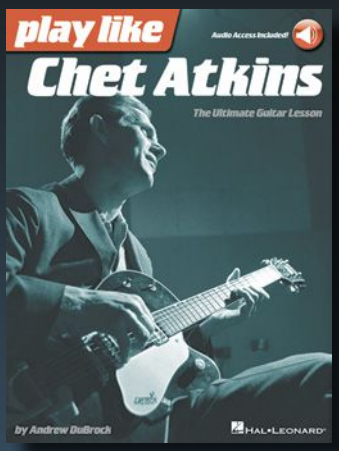

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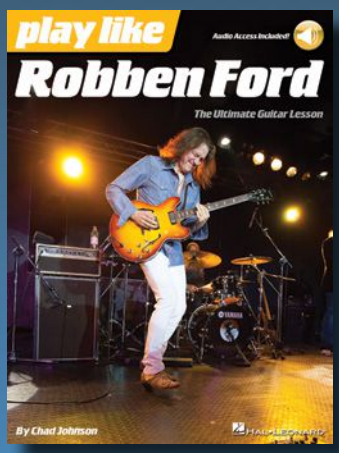

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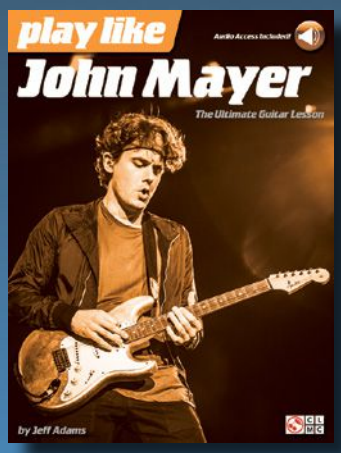

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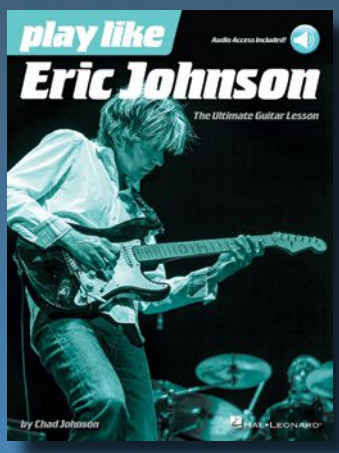

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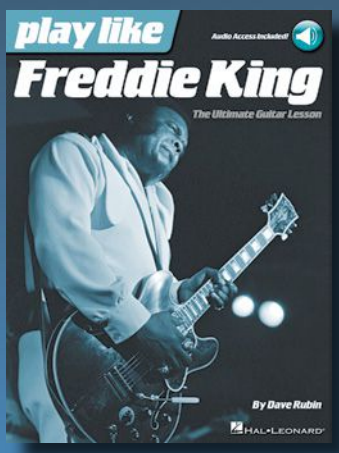

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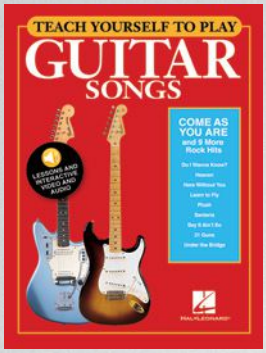

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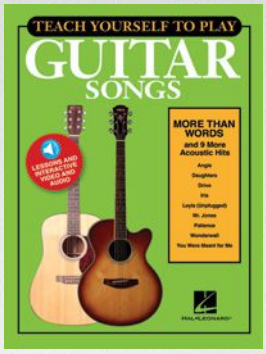

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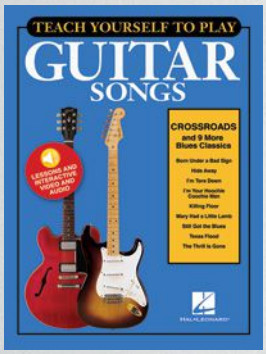

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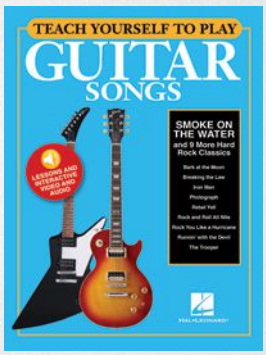

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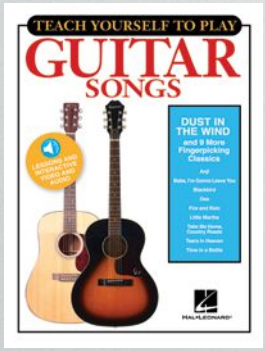

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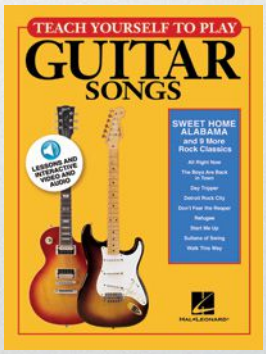

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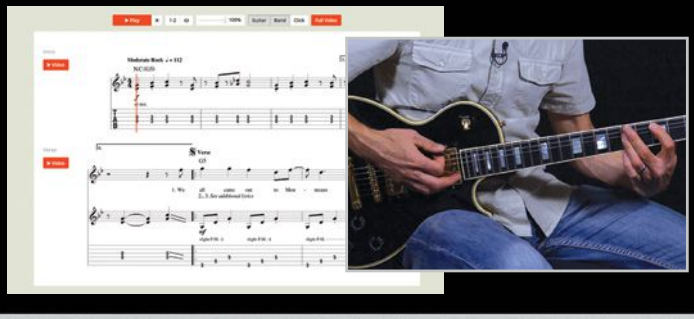

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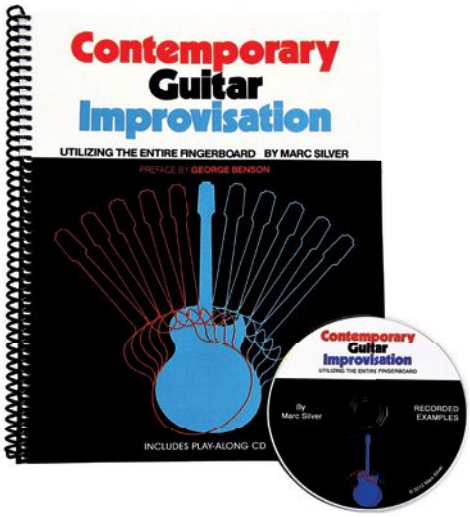

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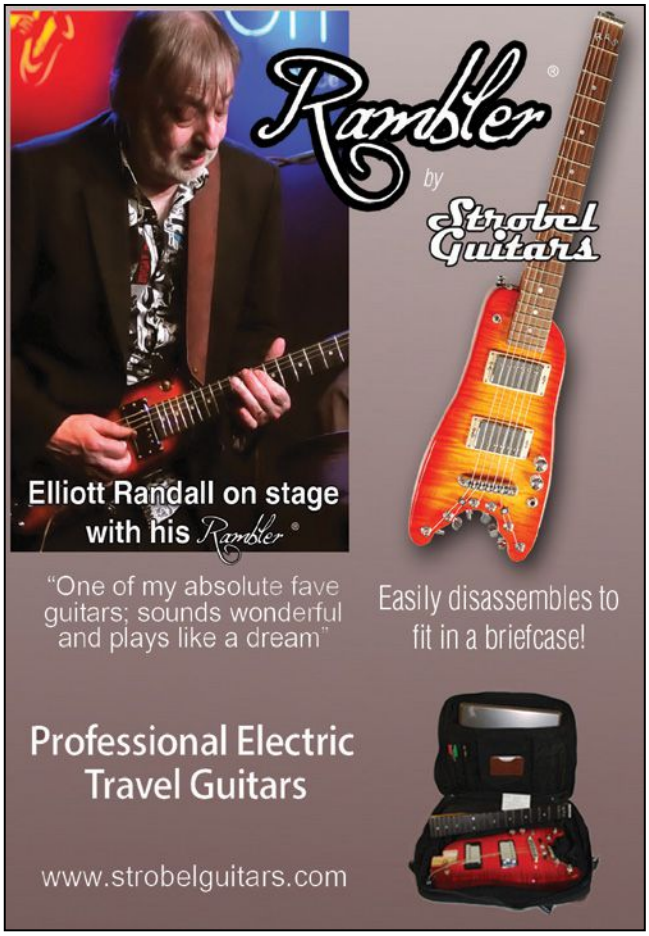
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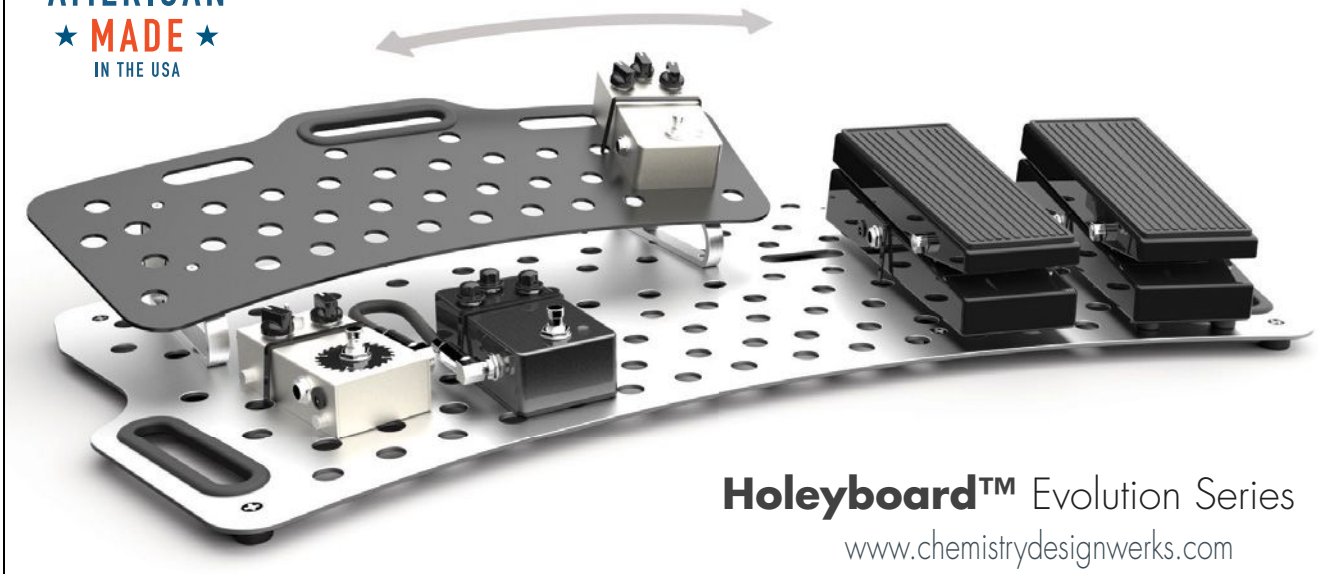

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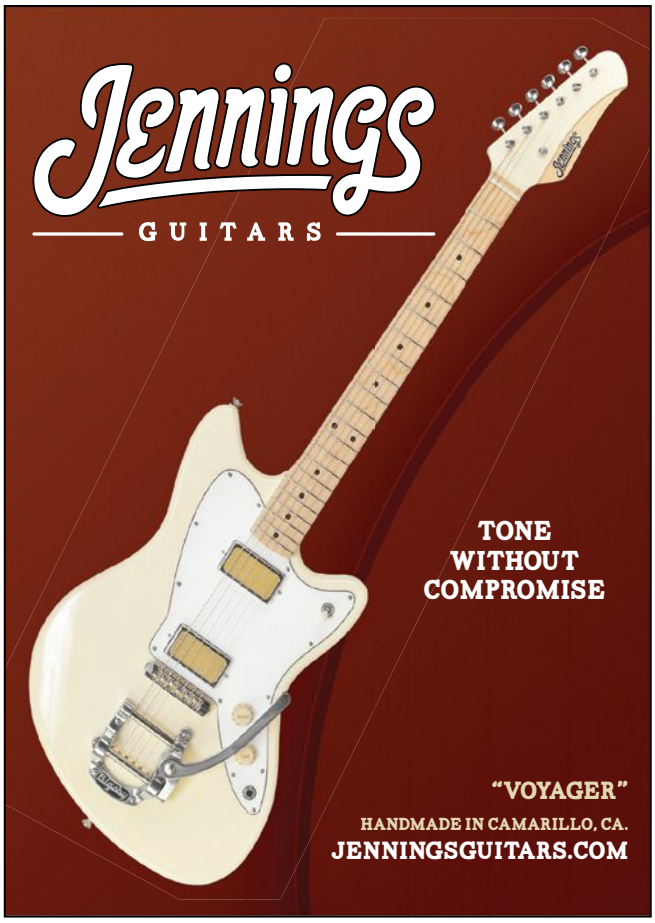

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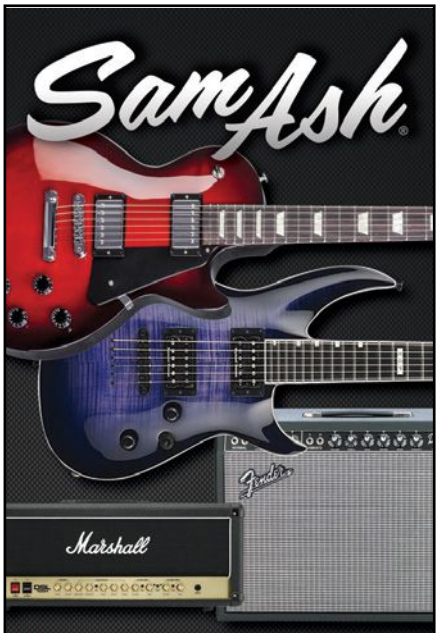

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IT'S HARD TO not notice the acoustics in Thunder Road's new location in West Seattle. The space was built in the Twenties as a church, and although the location has housed many different businesses (from a high-end shoe store to a tire dealership), the killer tones are finally getting their due. Frank Gross, who may very well be the youngest guitar shop helmsman I've known (he opened Thunder Road when he was 25!), outgrew his first location and moved just down the road to a new space that's four times larger. Named as an homage to the opening track of Springsteen's "Born to Run," Gross' shop may be just as inspiring.

NUMBER OF INSTRUMENTS CURRENTLY IN STOCK

Frank Gross (owner) We have just over 300 instruments in the shop at the moment with guitars coming in and going out the door every day.

COOLEST INSTRUMENT CURRENTLY IN THE SHOP

Right now we have an all-original 1964 Stratocaster in factory Lake Placid Blue with original hang tags and case candy. It's such a clean and well preserved example.

MOST EXPENSIVE INSTRUMENT YOU EVER SOLD

Last year we had a 1960 Burst in the shop which was hands-down the priciest instrument we've had in. It sold to a collector in the Pacific Northwest.

FAVORITE INSTRUMENT YOU EVER SOLD

Two really special instruments come to mind. The first guitar was a clean, one owner, and rare sunburst 1964 Gibson Firebird VII we had in a few years ago. It was a diamond in the rough. My second favorite was a 1965 Fender Jazzmaster in Lake Placid Blue. Within a span of a few years it made its way in and out of the shop three times, each time I told myself I was going to take it home and stash it in my personal collection. It ended up selling to a customer in New York.

MOST SOUGHT-AFTER INSTRUMENT BY CUSTOMERS

Our clientele generally looks for clean and original classic American guitars like Fenders, Gibsons, Rickenbackers and Martins. Folks are also after the second frontier vintage stuff like Silvertones, Harmonys, Airlines and Supros which we try to keep a good stock of.

BIGGEST PET PEEVE AS A SHOP OWNER

No "Stairway"!

FAVORITE CELEBRITY ENCOUNTER

On a slow day over the summer we had Mike McCready from Pearl Jam bring by Tom Petersson and Rick Nielsen from Cheap Trick to show them the shop. It was cool enough to have one of those guys come by, but all three was a trip.

ONE FACT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THUNDER ROAD

We ship to every corner of the world. You name it, we've probably sent a guitar there. We are friendly guys and try to make everyone feel right at home when visiting our shop.

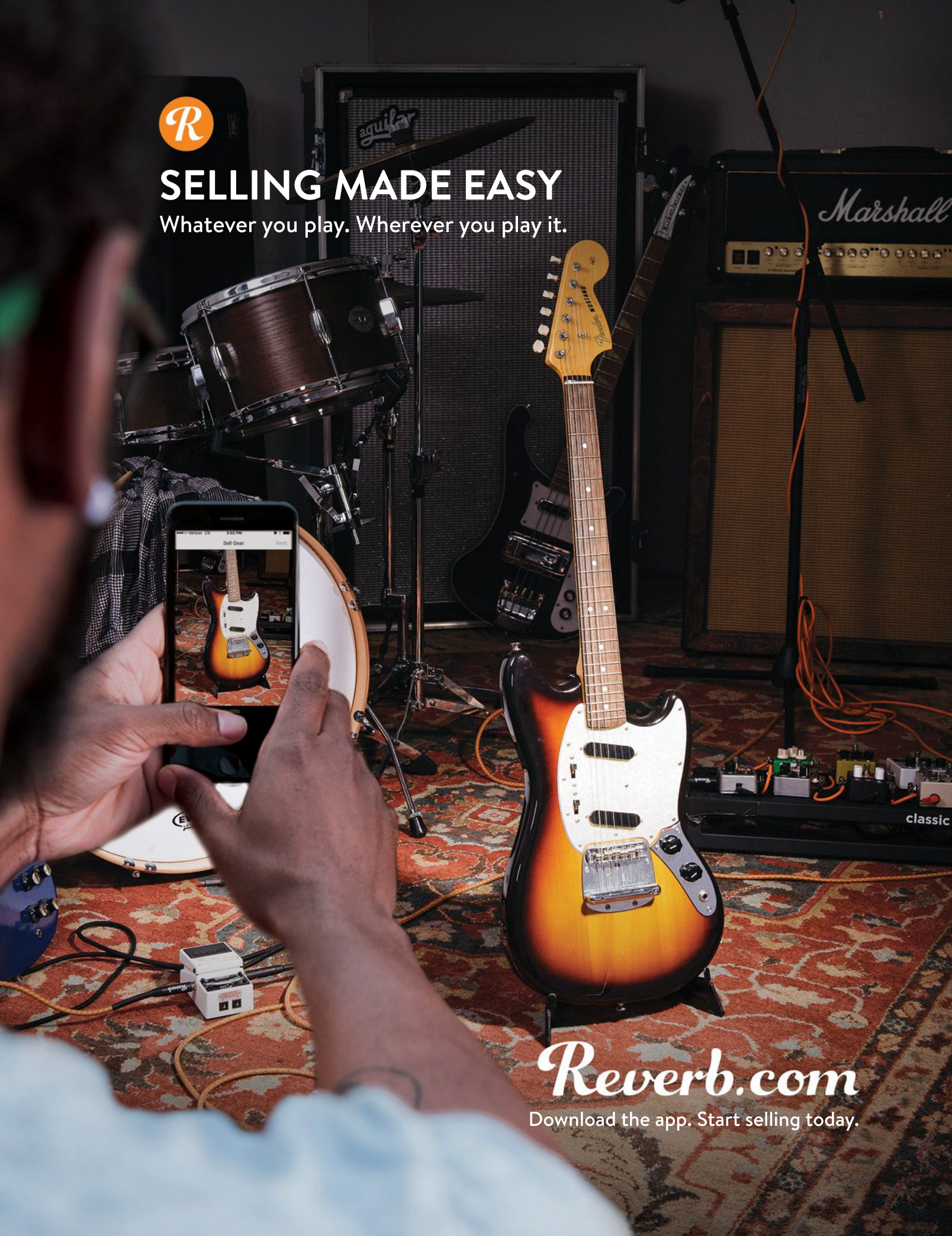
MOST COMMON SONG OR RIFF WHEN TRYING GUITARS

Classic Hendrix riffs or young aspiring rockers hammering out "Smells Like Teen Spirit." We are in Seattle, after all.

BEST ADVICE FOR SOMEONE LOOKING TO BUY A GUITAR

Check out and play many guitars as you can before making a purchase. Eventually one will speak to you, one you just can't put down. Buy that one—it's the one that has the songs in it!

by Eric Feldman, guitarshoptees.com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